

דניאל



DESMOND FORD

foreword by F.F. Bruce

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More than two thousand years ago an angel told Daniel, "Shut up the words, and seal the book, until the time of the end." Ever since, Bible students have been concerned with opening and understanding "the book."

The translators of the Septuagint made one of the earliest attempts. Both Saint Jerome in the early fifth century and John Calvin during the Reformation wrote significant commentaries. The impetus of the Protestant Reformation maturing in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries produced a tremendous interest in the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, and a number of outstanding commentaries came from this period.

In the twentieth century, ancient Near-Eastern studies and Biblical archaeology have brought to light masses of information relevant to the study of Daniel. Now more than a century since the release of Uriah Smith's monumental work, Southern Publishing Association brings Desmond Ford's *Daniel*, the most comprehensive statement by a Seventh-day Adventist in this century on the Book of Daniel.

Professor F. F. Bruce of Manchester Univer-

sity says in his foreword: "It is in the context of the whole Christian Bible and in the light of its New Testament development that Dr. Ford views and expounds the message of Daniel. Even in such an unlikely passage as the oracle of the seventy weeks he finds the gospel of free grace, . . . and I believe he is right in thus reading its plenary sense."

Dr. Ford says, "The most profound words of the Book of Daniel consist of a series of divine promises: to restrain transgression, to make an end of sins, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring about everlasting righteousness, to fulfill prophetic vision, and to dedicate a meeting place for God and man reconciled (see Daniel 9:24). The Good News for today's world is that these promises have already been fulfilled through God's unspeakable gift on Calvary and that they are soon to be filled full—consummated—in the advent of the King of kings and Lord of lords. And whosoever will may inherit the glory to come."

Desmond Ford has PhDs from Michigan State University and Manchester University. He has been the chairman of the theology department at Avondale College in Australia since 1961.

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foreword by F.F. Bruce

Southern Publishing Association, Nashville, Tennessee

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Foreword

It is a pleasure to write a foreword to this exposition of Daniel by Dr. Desmond Ford, whose personal and scholarly worth I learned to appreciate during his period of research under my supervision in the University of Manchester.

In 1972 Dr. Ford was awarded the Manchester degree of PhD for his thesis on *The Abomination of Desolation in Biblical Eschatology*. As befitted the purpose for which it was written, that work was controlled by the historico-critical method and was based on the primary exegesis of the Biblical text—that is, the exegesis which endeavours to establish what the author meant and what the first readers understood, or were intended to understand. The present work takes account of the primary sense but moves beyond it to explore and set forth the plenary sense.

In the last chapter of Daniel the seer is commanded to “seal the book, until the time of the end,” or the epoch of fulfilment (towards the middle of the second century BC, as I reckon). When it is then “unsealed” (published), he is told that many will search it diligently, and so knowledge (regarding the accomplishment of the divine purpose) will increase. From that time to the present day many have indeed searched it diligently, although their searching has not always led to an increase of knowledge. The original

Septuagint version of Daniel and some of the Qumran texts provide instances of the earliest attempts to interpret the book. Those godly souls who could not recognize in the Hasmonaean settlement the bringing in of everlasting righteousness foretold in Daniel 9:24 were faced with a task of reinterpretation and reapplication, not altogether unlike the reinterpretation and reapplication of earlier prophecies found in the Book of Daniel itself.

When in due course the Hellenistic monarchies were replaced by the Roman Empire, it was natural that the symbolism of Daniel should be reinterpreted so as to include in its scope this new and greater world-power. For Christians the New Testament presents an authoritative form of this reinterpretation. To them the Book of Daniel has not only a message for its own day but also a fuller message as part of the Christian canon. In particular, our Lord took up themes of the Book of Daniel and made them central themes of His own proclamation—the kingdom of God and the Son of man are outstanding examples. In His Olivet discourse He applied to the crisis impending in His own day such motifs of Daniel as the abomination of desolation, the unprecedented tribulation, the deliverance of the elect, and the glorious coming of the Son of man. These motifs are taken up

afresh by John in the Apocalypse; in his eyes the Roman Empire replaces the pagan empires of earlier centuries and is represented by a wild beast that incorporates features of the four imperial beasts portrayed by Daniel.

It is in the context of the whole Christian Bible and in the light of its New Testament development that Dr. Ford views and expounds the message of Daniel. Even in such an unlikely passage as the oracle of the seventy weeks he finds the gospel of free grace, "the Good News of a salvation objectively, historically, accomplished"—and I believe he is right in thus reading its plenary sense.

Because he strikes such an evangelical note, I am not much concerned that some aspects of his interpretation differ from mine or that my own sentiments towards ecumenists, charismatics, and our beloved brethren of the Roman obedience are more positive than his appear to be. The gospel which he proclaims is the gospel which I acknowledge; may it continue to speed on and triumph!

December, 1977

F. F. BRUCE

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Contents

Preface	11
Chief Commentaries Cited in Text	15
Key to Abbreviations and Transliterations	17

Introduction

Daniel and "Last Things"	21
The Theme of Daniel	25
Literary Structure of the Book With the Key Verse Thus Indicated .. .	28
The Date of Daniel	30
Principles of Prophetic Interpretation: A Hermeneutic for the Study of Daniel	45
The Special Characteristics of Prophetic Passages	48
Excursus—The New Testament Use of the Old Testament	56
Interpretation of Apocalyptic Prophecy and of Daniel in Particular	60
Contemporary Systems of Interpretation	65

Commentary

Preface to Daniel 1	75
Commentary on Daniel 1	78
Preface to Daniel 2	84
Commentary on Daniel 2	89
Preface to Daniel 3	102
Commentary on Daniel 3	104
Preface to Daniel 4	111
Commentary on Daniel 4	115
Preface to Daniel 5	122
Commentary on Daniel 5	125
Preface to Daniel 6	130
Commentary on Daniel 6	133
Preface to Daniel 7	138
Commentary on Daniel 7	142
Preface to Daniel 8	160
Commentary on Daniel 8	183
Excursus on Daniel 8:10-13	194
Excursus on Daniel 8:14—Do the 2300 Evenings-Mornings Represent 1150 Days?	196
Preface to Daniel 9	198
Commentary on Daniel 9	221
Excursus on Daniel 9:24	237
Preface to Daniel 10	239
Commentary on Daniel 10	247
Preface to Daniel 11	252
Commentary on Daniel 11	260
Preface to Daniel 12	278
Commentary on Daniel 12	280

Appendices

Appendix A	286
Appendix B	288
Appendix C	289
Appendix D	291
Appendix E	294
Appendix F	300
Appendix G	305

דניאל



Preface

When the pessimist philosopher Schopenhauer, sitting all disheveled on a park bench, was asked by the attendant who he was, he answered, "I wish to God I knew." The same question and answer echoes through all human activity. Twentieth-century man by his own confession is lost. He has not only lost his way but his address. He who in times past asked the questions has become a question to himself. Modern culture, whether reflected by art, literature, music, or political and social activity, affirms one message—"man is sick"—and he is sick because he is lost.

Every ideology depends upon an anthropology. In other words, every system of thought is based on a specific conviction regarding the nature of man, and whether the system is right depends on whether the original assumption is right. Obviously, therefore, the continuing failure of almost all modern ideologies must be the result of wrong solutions to the riddle of man. Could Pascal have been right when he declared, "Without knowing Jesus Christ we cannot know what life is nor death, God, or ourselves"?

Said Paul Tillich, "God died in the nineteenth century, and man died in the twentieth." As we view the course of human thought it seems that Newton (without intending to) dismissed God by his theory of a mechanical universe. Darwin by his

view of evolution dismissed man, once thought to have been made in the image of God and therefore distinct and glorious. Freud, nearer still to our own day, dismissed mind by his insistence that man was but an animal, motivated not by reason but by hidden unconscious drives. In the past hundred years we have quarreled, not over whether man is an animal, but as to what type of animal. Is he motivated by his collective ancestral impulses and manners (Darwin), by economic necessity—by his stomach (Marx), or by his libido (Freud)? But regardless of *what* "makes Sammy run," *where* is he running and *why*?

The cardinal fact of our times is meaninglessness. With God sacked, man demoted, and mind denied, what remains? Is it now possible to use terms such as "good," "better," "best"? Is anything "good"? And if so, how does one know? What is life all about? Is it "a sickness whose only cure is death," "a nightmare between two eternities," "the penalty for the crime of being born," a "tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing"? If life is but a "dusty scuffle over a parched terrain" and the human race but a planetary eczema with each member naught but an enlarged protein molecule and potential fertilizer, should one really care about anything? And if so, what and why?

These questions cannot be avoided, because of

what philosophers have called "the horrible choice." Whether Jimmy the genius or Max the moron, from the dawn of consciousness each day to its eclipse at night, we are all engaged in the decision-making business. And decisions are made by each of us on the basis of who we think we are and where we think we are going. Life view depends upon world view, and world view depends upon one's beliefs regarding origins. How did this world begin? Is it the product of chance? Does time, plus matter, plus chance, make a world, and if so whence the matter and how come mind? Instead of lazily saying, "No matter, never mind," let us, in order to have a basis for the inescapable duty of decision, seek to know the origin of both matter and mind.

The latter is a clue which most ignore. We use our minds as we use our eyes and as we perceive through a window—mind, eyes, and window are taken for granted, and we concentrate only on what is revealed through them. But again, how come mind? Can mental and physical vision be attributed to chance? What a tremendous coincidence that this enlarged human molecule, this mass of mud, just happens to have a gadget that "shows" the rest of the universe and makes thought possible. If reason is the product of chance, can its products be trusted? On the other hand, if reason can be trusted, must it not be because reason itself is the product of Eternal Reason?² If personality is the highest product of the universe, must it not be the product of an Eternal Person?³ In this age when meaninglessness has become the great disease of the human race, far exceeding all other maladies; when suicide has become the badge of our despair, then happy the man or woman who has asked these questions and come to a positive answer. They have found some anchor for life, a lodestone which gives significance to existence. One purpose of the present book is to show that optimistic answers to life's inescapable questions are valid. The ancient volume we here investigate declares, "There is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has made known . . . what will be in the latter days" (2:28, RSV*).

If genuine prophecy is found in Scripture, the main issues of our age are met. (This book

endeavors to substantiate this claim.) Prophecy demonstrates that the world is a ship rather than an iceberg, that despite appearances it is not a runaway, completely out of control. And if this is so, even men and women who also seem to be runaways may have hope. The God of the macrocosm is God also of the microcosm. If Scripture is true, and prophecy testifies that it is so, our heavenly Father values each person as more precious than fine gold and counts the very hairs of our heads. He who has a plan for the globe has a plan for each inhabitant of that globe.

After the tide of philosophical, political, and sociological optimism that marked the swallowing of Hegelian dictums in the nineteenth century, the gospel of inevitable progress became the orthodoxy of the intelligentsia in every realm. They relegated the catastrophic end of the world threatened by Scripture to a theological limbo as a relic of a barbaric age.

With the passage of the years and their tale of two world wars and a global economic depression between, as well as approximately sixty wars since the euphoria of peace in 1945, the fashionable philosophy has changed. The creed of inevitable progress has become a heresy, and the pessimistic but valid insights of hunchbacked Kierkegaard has replaced it. We now live in the era of existentialism wherein men everywhere confess life's problematical nature and their own lack of answers.

Because of the widespread malaise resulting from the current disease of meaninglessness, many twentieth-century theologians have turned again to the study of apocalyptic—that type of prophecy found in Daniel and Revelation which claims to set forth in symbols the divine plan for the world.

A cataract of learned articles and books has recently poured forth on this subject from religious presses. While it was long fashionable to deny that Christ could ever have been the teacher of apocalyptic themes, the wheel of research has now turned full circle, and on every hand theologians confess what their forebears denied—namely that Jesus believed in the apocalyptic images of Daniel

* All Bible quotations not otherwise specified are from the Revised Standard Version.

and drew heavily upon them in proclaiming His own message.⁴

New Testament scholars of almost every hue now confess that the entire eschatology of the New Testament is based on that first set forth in the Book of Daniel. The Olivet discourse, as recorded in Mt 24, Mk 13, and Lk 21; the prophetic passage of 2 Th 2; John's allusions to antichrist in his epistles; the entire Book of Revelation—all draw their primary materials from the Book of Daniel.

Daniel can be considered as the "seedbed" of eschatology, the Olivet sermon and 2 Th 2 as the "blade" and "ear," and the Book of Revelation the "full corn." This being the case, there is every incitement to investigate afresh what Scripture says on the future of our world, and every such investigation should begin with that book which Christ urged His latter-day disciples to "understand"—the book of "the prophet Daniel" (Mt 24:15).

This book shows that amid the shadows stands unseen the Eternal Watcher—"the God in whose hand is your breath, and whose are all your ways." He stands ready to comfort and equip the exile, deliver the oppressed, enlighten the ignorant, humble the proud, chastise the profane, and restore the penitent. We are not left alone to fight the battles of life, to be crushed by its Nebuchadnezzars, to be swallowed by its lions, or to be cremated by its furnaces.

The most profound words of the Book of Daniel consist of a series of divine promises: to restrain transgression, to make an end of sins, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to fulfill prophetic vision, and to dedicate a meeting place for God and man reconciled (9:24, paraphrased). The Good News for today's world is that these promises have already been fulfilled through God's unspeakable gift on Calvary and that they are soon to be filled full—consummated—in the advent of the King of kings and Lord of lords.⁵ And whosoever will may inherit the glory to come.

Only he who sees God as Creator of all at time's beginning, Judge of all at time's end, and Redeemer of all throughout the realms of time—only he can make sense of existence. Knowing whence he came and whither he goes, he

can choose aright amid life's apparent maelstrom and be assured that when the shadows flee away and the storm is stilled he will be delivered from trial and mortality to shine like the sun and "like the stars for ever and ever." May the perusal of these pages strengthen the reader's conviction of the intimate relationship between heaven and earth and establish his confidence in the God who sees the mountains of difficulty that appear to block our way to joy and who is able to save now and forever all who trust in Him.

—————
⁴ *Pensees*, Chapter xx.

⁵ Professor Robert Haldane affirms: "If my mental processes are determined wholly by the motions of atoms in my brain, I have no reason to suppose that my beliefs are true, . . . and hence I have no reason for supposing my brain to be composed of atoms" (*Possible Worlds*, p. 209). C. S. Lewis states: "If the solar system was brought about by an accidental collision, then the appearance of organic life on this planet was also an accident, and the whole evolution of Man was an accident too. If so, then all our present thoughts are mere accidents—the accidental by-product of the movement of atoms. And this holds for the thoughts of the materialists and astronomers as well as for anyone else's. But if *their* thoughts—i.e., of materialism and astronomy—are merely accidental by-products, why should we believe them to be true? I see no reason for believing that one accident should be able to give me a correct account of all the other accidents. It's like expecting that the accidental shape taken by the splash when you upset a milk-jug should give you a correct account of how the jug was made and why it was upset" (*Undeceptions: Essays on Theology and Ethics* [London: Geoffrey Bles, 1971], p. 30).

Concerning ultimate reality we are limited to the following possibilities, and only in one of them can the human personality rest:

1. Eternal Nothing, as the cause of matter and mind.
2. Eternal Matter, as the cause of mind.
3. Eternal Mind, as the cause of matter and mind.

It is no more difficult to believe in a personal God who made all things than it is to believe that I, a personal being and creation, exist. My existence demands His. It would require a Supreme Mind to create the human mind. This fact of God has to be accepted before anything at all makes sense. And if God exists, we would expect that He would give us just such a revelation of His will as the Scriptures claim to be.

⁶ "What baffles the materialist is the emergence of personal character in a world of chemical reactions. Only one who is supremely personal can be the Ground for the emergence of even the finite personality which we see in our fellows and know intimately in ourselves. If God is only an impersonal force, then the stream *has* risen higher than its source, for we can at least be certain that personality appears in us.

"The people who have tried to hold to belief in God while rejecting the personal aspect of the Divine have sincerely tried to

make an advance over a primitive view, but they have, unfortunately, moved in the wrong direction. Just as life is manifestly superior to matter and as consciousness is superior to mere biological phenomena, the appreciation of personal value is superior to mere awareness of external environment. The line of advance is not away from the personal, but toward it and possibly through it. Many of those who resist the notion of God as personal are, no doubt, trying to avoid what seems at first to be a limitation to our size and experience, and this effort is wholesome, but personality is not such a limiting conception. No one in his senses would think of interpreting the personal character of God as limited to the low level of personality illustrated in ourselves. Of course, God is more than we are, but He must be at least as much as we are" (D. E. Trueblood, *Philosophy of Religion* [New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957], p. 270).

* For nearly a century scholars argued that the Olivet discourse was not uttered by Jesus. They pictured Jesus as a nineteenth-century Western intellectual who could not possibly have believed in such chimeras as the end of the world. Since the thorough investigation by G. R. Beasley-Murray of all the significant literature on the topic (see *Jesus and the Future*), inventions such as the "little apocalypse" theory, coined to explain the origin of Mk 13, have fallen out of favor. The recently revised *Peake's Commentary* says on page 814 that "the attempt to remove the eschatological element from the teaching of Jesus is without justification." Such acknowledgments from scholars of all countries could be multiplied. Pannenberg's *Jesus—God and Man*, in its admissions regarding Christ's belief

in apocalyptic themes, is typical of many modern discussions of this subject.

* "The New Testament writers see the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises in two great redemptive events: the earthly person and mission of Jesus, and his glorious appearing at the end of the age. . . . In the biblical perspective, these are not two separate events but two acts of a single drama of redemption. . . ."

"All New Testament writers look forward to an eschatological consummation of all that was promised by the prophets. The Kingdom of God, eternal life, the resurrection of the dead, the vindication of the righteous in the day of judgment, and their transformation by the gift of the Holy Spirit (Ezek. 36:26, 27) all await the Age to Come. Yet because of the person, mission, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, all these eschatological events have witnessed a fulfillment in history. The Kingdom of God awaits the Age to Come, but it has invaded history in the person and mission of Jesus.

"Eternal life will follow the resurrection at the end of the age, but in the resurrection of Jesus, the eschatological event has begun and eternal life has come to mortal men in history. The day of judgment will introduce the Age to Come, but by virtue of the atoning death of Jesus, the judgment of acquittal has already been pronounced on men of faith. The eschatological redemption will mean 'spiritual'—that is, spirit-transformed—bodies for the redeemed (1 Cor. 15:44; Rom. 8:23); but the transforming gift of the Spirit has already been given to men in history" (George Eldon Ladd, "Unity and Variety in New Testament Faith," *Christianity Today*, November 19, 1963, pp. 22, 24).

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Key to Abbreviations and Transliterations

- JBL *Journal of Biblical Literature*
 LXX Septuagint
 SDA BC *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*
 TDNT *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*

The books of the Bible have been abbreviated as follows:

Gen Ex Lev Num Deut Jos Jgs Ruth 1 Sa 2 Sa 1 Ki 2 Ki 1 Chr 2 Chr Ezr Neh Est Job
 Ps Prov Ec Song Is Jer Lam Eze Dan Hos Joel Amos Ob Jon Mic Nah Hab Zep
 Hag Zec Mal
 Mt Mk Lk Jn Acts Rom 1 Cor 2 Cor Gal Eph Php Col 1 Th 2 Th 1 Ti 2 Ti Tit Phm
 Heb Jas 1 Pe 2 Pe 1 Jn 2 Jn 3 Jn Jude Rev

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The system of transliterating Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek words in this commentary is the same as that used in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary*.

Hebrew and Aramaic

Consonants

א = ' (aleph)	ו = w	כ, כּ = k	ז = ' (zayin)	ר = r
ב, בּ = b	ז = z	ל = l	פ = p	ש = s
ג, גּ = g	ח = ch	מ = m	פּ = ph	שׁ = sh
ד, דּ = d	ט = t	נ = n	צ = s	ת = t
ה = h	י = y	ס = s	ק = q	תּ = th

Masoretic Vowel Pointings

אָ = a	וֹ = o
עָ (vocal shewa) = e	וֹ = o
עֵ = e	וּ = u
יֵ = i	וֹ = u
יִ = i	

Greek

Α α = A a	Ζ ζ = Z z	Λ λ = L l	Π π = P p	Φ φ = Ph ph
Β β = B b	Η η = E e	Μ μ = M m	Ρ ρ = R r	Χ χ = Ch ch
Γ γ = G g	Θ θ = Th th	Ν ν = N n	Σ σ = S s	Ψ ψ = Ps ps
Δ δ = D d	Ι ι = I i	Ξ ξ = X x	Τ τ = T t	Ω ω = O o
Ε ε = E e	Κ κ = K k	Ο ο = O o	Υ υ = U u	Ή ή = H h

Introduction

Daniel and "Last Things"

Ours is an apocalyptic age. We think in terms of a likely catastrophic end to the world. Historians liken this century to the days before the Roman Empire collapsed.

Recent secular publications seek to sound a public alarm regarding the destiny of our world. Such volumes include *Bomb Culture*, by Geoffrey Nuttall; *Unless Peace Comes*, edited by Nigel Calder; *The Doomsday Book* and *The Biological Time Bomb*, by Rattray Taylor; *The Population Bomb*, by Paul Ehrlich; *Future Shock*, by Alvin Toffler; *Modern Art and the Death of a Culture*, by Hans Rookmaaker; *Pollution and the Death of Man*, by Francis Schaeffer. All of these shout the conviction that we live at the end of an era, and some say the end of the world.

We have said before that life view depends upon world view and that world view depends upon one's concept of origins. But it is also true to say that one's life and world views are directly related to one's belief concerning not only origins but destiny—one's view concerning "the end"—whether it be a Christian's heaven or a gradual cooling down of the sun until all life ultimately freezes.

The Book of Daniel speaks directly on this matter. It repeatedly claims to have to do with "the time of the end." It belongs to that study of "the

last things" known as eschatology. Let us pause to inquire regarding the significance of such a study.

This is, theologically and otherwise, the eschatological era. To speak of eschatology is to speak of hope in a hopeless world; it is to assert purpose and meaning in an age of ideological nihilism. It is a presentation of a viable theodicy to an age of deicide; it justifies God to a world so suspicious of Him as to declare Him dead. It vindicates the divine silence and apparent nonintervention to salve a world's gaping sores. As never before in the Christian age, this area of truth has become vital for the church and the world. No purgatory or hell conceived by the human mind could exceed in awfulness our own sick world in unending existence, and such a concept cherished by the individual acts as a moral depressant. An ailing and lost society can find healing for its ills only through acceptance of the Bible's eschatological hope.

Writers from every school of theological thought have recognized the vital importance of the truth of eschatology and its study. We give some typical instances.

Those who take a materialistic or naturalistic view of the world do not need to raise any questions about its end; it is an essentially meaningless affair

for them, and it does not matter whether or how it ends. But if we take an ethical view of the world and of history, we must have an eschatology; we must have the moral order exhibited, vindicated, brought out in perfect clearness as what it is. It is because the Bible is so intensely ethical in spirit that it is so rich in eschatological elements—in visions of the final and universal triumph of God, of the final and universal defeat of evil.

It is not ethical to suppose that the moral condition of the world is that of an endless suspense, in which the good and the evil permanently balance each other, and contest with each other the right to inherit the earth. Such a dualistic conception is virtually atheistic, and the whole Bible could be read as a protest against it. Neither is it ethical to suppose that the moral history of the world consists of cycles in which the good and the evil are alternately victorious. There are, indeed, times when that is the impression which history makes upon us, but these are times when the senses are too strong for the spirit; and as the moral consciousness recovers its vigour, we see how inconsistent such a view is with its postulate, that the good alone has the right to reign. The Christian doctrine of a final judgment is not the putting of an arbitrary term to the course of history; it is a doctrine without which history ceases to be capable of moral construction.¹

"Eschatology is the crown and capstone of dogmatic theology" [Pohle]. . . . It is the one locus of theology, in which all the other loci must come to a head, to a final conclusion. Dr. Kuyper correctly points out that every other locus left some question unanswered, to which eschatology should supply the answer. In theology it is the question, how God is finally perfectly glorified in the work of His hands, and how the counsel of God is fully realized; in anthropology, the question, how the disrupting influence of sin is completely overcome; in christology, the question, how the work of Christ is crowned with perfect victory; in soteriology, the question, how the work of the Holy Spirit at last issues in the complete redemption and glorification of the people of God; and in ecclesiology, the question of the final apotheosis of the Church. All these questions must find their answer in the last locus of dogmatics, making it the real capstone of dogmatic theology.²

The subject matter of eschatology is found in the prophetic sections of Scripture, particularly in Daniel and the New Testament passages which build upon it. Prior to the Christian age in the

western desert of Judea an apocalyptic sect at Qumran by the Dead Sea cherished the Book of Daniel and lived in accordance with the members' anticipation of the fulfillment of its prophecies. They anticipated the coming of the Messiah and the establishment of the kingdom of God.

Similarly in His sermon on the end of the world Christ quoted specifically from "the prophet Daniel" and added, "Let the reader understand" (Mt 24:15; Mk 13:14). Indeed this book is the only volume of Scripture upon which Christ placed His finger with the admonition to search its pages. Apparently only those who comprehend this apocalyptic book of the Old Testament will be prepared for Earth's final crisis.

It seems unlikely that Christianity itself would have taken the form it did but for the writings of the captive prophet of Babylon. Over eighty times Christ called Himself "the Son of man," referring to the chief figure in Daniel's initial prophetic visions (see Mk 14:62; Dan 7:13). On trial for His life, and adjured on oath, He affirmed His claim to be the Son of man, who would one day return in the clouds of heaven as the Judge of all men.

At the commencement of Christ's ministry the message "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," and all His subsequent references to the kingdom, echoed well-known passages in the Book of Daniel.³ Similarly, our Lord's teachings concerning the resurrection of the dead, the judgment, eternal life, the antichrist, and His church as the new temple, were all the result of His study of this Old Testament seer. The words of Karl Heim first, then of W. C. Allen are significant:

At least in its main features Jesus accepts the vision of the future of the world given by Daniel. For He solemnly adopts the principal part in the final act of the cosmic drama seen in the book of Daniel. . . . The "Kingdom of Heaven" also, which He had announced in His first call to repentance, is the eternal Empire that according to Daniel is to follow the terrestrial empires. For the import of this solemn declaration by Jesus it is immaterial whether the author of Daniel lived about 600 B.C. under Jehoiakim in the Babylonian exile, as he says himself, or whether the book was written in the first half of the second century B.C.⁴

Even in St. Mark we have the following apocalyptic ideas: "The kingdom of God," "the Son of Man," "the coming of the Son of Man in glory with the angels," "life" (9:45 . . .); "the world to come," 10:30; the resurrection, 12:25; "the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven," 14:62; "inheriting eternal life," 19:17; the nearness of the coming kingdom, 9:1.⁵

In the footsteps of Jesus, Paul and John drew from Daniel in their portrayal of latter-day events. It is impossible to begin to understand the depths of the New Testament without a close study of Daniel. Because of this, scholars such as Westcott have declared, "There can be no doubt that it [Daniel] exercised a greater influence upon the early Christian Church than any other writing of the Old Testament."⁶ Others such as Ernst Käsemann affirm that the apocalyptic of this Old Testament book is "the mother of Christian theology." Because of the influence of Christianity on the Western world, millions today think as they do about the future in terms of what Daniel wrote and Christ and the apostles amplified.⁷

Special blessings are promised for all who make the truths of Daniel their rule of life. There are good grounds for believing that the last spiritual awakening the world will know before the return of Christ will be sparked by the study of this book in connection with the elevation of "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" Diligent students of prophecy will contribute to the last religious revival, turning "many to righteousness," and their reward is plainly stated—they "shall shine . . . like the stars for ever and ever" (12:3; cf. Mt 13:43).

These things "the angels desire to look into,"⁸ but it is our special privilege as the human inheritors of Daniel's trust to study and understand the truths entrusted to him for this "time of the end" which is so soon to climax in the end of time.

⁵ James Denney, *Studies in Theology* (New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son, 1897), pp. 239, 240.

⁶ Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1953), p. 665.

⁷ The first time the Scriptures mention the kingdom of heaven is in Dan 2:44, 45, and the second reference is in 7:27.

⁸ Karl Heim, *Jesus, the World's Perfecter* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1961), p. 142.

⁹ W. C. Allen, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1915), p. 163.

¹⁰ Article "Daniel," *Smith's Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 1, p. 540.

¹¹ While not all eschatology is apocalyptic, all apocalyptic is eschatological. With Cullmann, Matthew Black, H. H. Rowley, et al., it must be said that the belief in the return of Christ, as pictured in Mk 13, is not a delusion of primitive Christianity but something inherent in fundamental Christian doctrine, and "to reject this hope is to mutilate the New Testament message of salvation."

In summary we should think of J. A. T. Robinson's reminder that "the eschatology of the Gospel of Mark as it now stands is dominated, and must be interpreted, by the apocalypse in chapter 13. . . . And what is true of Mark is true both of Matthew and Luke: any reference to the End must be understood in the light of their concluding apocalypse" (*Jesus and His Coming*, p. 118). Having granted this, it should next be added that what is thus said concerning the eschatology of the Synoptic Gospels is true of the New Testament as a whole. Furthermore, whether the disparate nature of the Old Testament is affirmed or denied, it is difficult to avoid seeing that the apocalyptic eschatology presented in the New Testament is modeled on that of the Old, though the height and depth of the former transcend the latter.

The words of W. Pannenberg are appropriate: "He . . . was not an apocalyptic, although the views of the apocalyptic tradition are everywhere the presupposition of what he said and did. Jesus certainly thought in apocalyptic categories" (*Jesus-God and Man*, p. 217).

"His message can only be understood within the horizon of apocalyptic expectations" (*ibid.*, p. 32).

F. R. Barry also wrote in the same vein: "The whole story of the life of Jesus moves in an atmosphere of wonder, fringed, as it were, with a numinous corona, whose flames leap up in immeasurable splendour into spaces which we cannot chart. We cannot tear it out of that setting. Apart from it there is no story to tell. And it is the triumph of the eschatologists to have recovered that atmosphere" (*The Relevance of Christianity*, p. 98).

¹² Note that the quoted New Testament passage particularly applies to Daniel the prophet. "This salvation was the theme which the prophets pondered and explored, those who prophesied about the grace of God awaiting you. They tried to find out what was the time, and what the circumstances, to which the spirit of Christ in them pointed, foretelling the sufferings in store for Christ and the splendours to follow; and it was disclosed to them that the matter they treated of was not for their time but for yours. And now it has been openly announced to you through preachers who brought you the Gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. These are things that angels long to see into" (1 Pe 1:10-12, NEB). While this general comment applies to the prophets as a whole, several items here refer especially to Daniel:

1. He pondered and explored concerning the "time" foretold (8:27; 9:1-3, 21-23; 10:1; 12:5-9).

2. He foretold Christ's sufferings (9:24-26).

“Last Things”

3. He predicted the splendor to come for all who experience salvation (12:1-3).

4. It was stressed to Daniel that he wrote for later generations

(12:4, 9, 10).

5. The only book in Scripture which records instances of angelic inquiry into matters prophetic is Daniel (8:13; 12:6, 7).

The Theme of Daniel

As has already been said, the Book of Daniel shows, despite appearances, that God the Eternal King is in control and that shortly He is to demonstrate that fact by winding up the present order of things. We wish now to spell out in more detail the dominant teaching of the book so the reader may use this knowledge as a key to unlock the meaning of each chapter.

The very title of the book is significant, as is so often the case with books of Scripture. Daniel means "God is judge,"¹ and the pages of the book are so many elaborations of that truth. The book begins and ends with references to judgment—first the judgment on apostate Israel; finally the judgment on the wicked—represented by Babylon's king of the north—and on the righteous—represented by Daniel, who is to rest until the allocation of his eternal destiny (cf. 12:13; Ps 1:5).

In the heart of the book (7:9-13) we have one of the greatest judgment scenes of Scripture, in which God is portrayed as the Ancient of Days with the books of judgment open and the multitudes of angels present. On each side of this dramatic picture we have other references to judgment. In chapters 4 and 5 Nebuchadnezzar, the proud boaster, is judged and humbled to animal status, and to Belshazzar his grandson came the message "You have been weighed in the balances and

found wanting." The two chapters following chapter 7 give the very time of the judgment to come, and the twelfth chapter spells out in detail its significance concerning rewards and punishments.

We should however keep in mind the broader meaning of *judge* and *judgment* to the Hebrews. The leaders of Israel such as Gideon, Samson, and Jephthah were infinitely more than what moderns mean by "judges." They could well have been called saviors, deliverers, rulers. The primitive Hebrew root *din* means "to bring justice," "to judge." As the ideas of ruling and judging are in practice closely joined in the East, so also are they linked in linguistic usage. According to the lexicons, to judge anyone meant chiefly either (1) "to condemn," "to punish the guilty" (Gen 15:14; Job 36:31), or (2) "to defend the right of anyone," "to cause him to obtain his right" (Gen 30:6; Ps 54:1, KJV). The noun is related to the Hebrew *Adonai* which means the Strong One, the Sovereign, or Controller. Thus also prominent in this book is the word *kingdom* (*malkuth*) occurring several times more often in Daniel than in all the other prophets combined. Related Hebrew concepts to *din* and *malkuth* were *sadaq* and *mishpat*, pertaining to what is righteous and just (see Deut 1:16; 16:18; Jer 11:20).

Collating the significance of this linguistic

evidence concerning the meaning of Daniel (who is named more than seventy times in the book), we find in it a testimony to God as King, Judge, Deliverer, Vindicator, Warrior—all particularly appropriate for this book. Every chapter of the book testifies to God in one of these aspects. He is seen delivering His threatened people, judging and punishing rebels however high their station, vindicating truth and its believers, controlling the affairs of nations until setting up His own earthly kingdom of everlasting righteousness.

We began this consideration of the theme of Daniel by considering the meaning of the name itself. The case is strengthened when we take into account also the meaning of the names of the earthly rulers found in the early chapters. Nebuchadnezzar means, "May Nabu protect the boundary," while Belshazzar means, "May Bel protect the king." Both these names suggest that the deities of heathen worship are sovereign in their protecting providence. Daniel's name and message vindicate the true God and His worship by way of contrast.

The foregoing on the theme of vindication becomes exceedingly relevant as we consider the historical setting of Daniel. The beginning of the Babylonian exile marked the end of one era and the beginning of another. To the Israelites it seemed that the kingdom of God on earth had collapsed and that Yahweh had surrendered His people to the Gentiles.

From 586 BC the temple was no more. Prior to that, the ark of the covenant had been removed and hidden. Emblematic of the whole tragedy had been the withdrawal of the Shekinah from the temple and from Mount Zion (see Eze 10). God had forsaken Israel—or so it seemed. What would the future hold? Did God intend to forget His rebel planet and particularly the covenant race which had so continually forgotten Him?

Says Keil:

The destruction of the kingdom of Judah and the deportation of the Jews into Babylonish captivity, not only put an end to the independence of the covenant people, but also to the continuance of that constitution of the kingdom of God which was founded at Sinai; and that not only temporarily, but for ever, for in its integrity it was never restored.¹

In his last address and warning to the people against their continued apostasy from the Lord their God, Moses had, among other severe chastisements that would fall upon them, threatened this as the last of the punishments with which God would visit them. This threatening was repeated by all the prophets; but at the same time, following the example of Moses, they further announced that the Lord would again receive into His favour His people driven into exile, if, humbled under their sufferings, they would turn again unto Him; that He would gather them together from the heathen lands, and bring them back to their own land, and renew them by His Spirit, and would then erect anew in all its glory the kingdom of David under the Messiah.²

If the prophets before the captivity, therefore, connect the deliverance of Israel from Babylon and their return to Canaan immediately with the setting up of the kingdom of God in its glory, without giving any indication that between the end of the Babylonish exile and the appearance of the Messiah a long period would intervene, this uniting together of the two events is not to be explained only from the perspective and apotelesmatic character of the prophecy, but has its foundation in the very nature of the thing itself. . . . The fact of the uniting together of the future glory of the kingdom of God under the Messiah with the deliverance of Israel from exile, has perfect historical veracity. The banishment of the covenant people from the land of the Lord and their subjection to the heathen, was not only the last of those judgments which God had threatened against His degenerate people, but it also continues till the perverse rebels are exterminated, and the penitents are turned with sincere hearts to God the Lord and are saved through Christ. Consequently the exile was for Israel the last space for repentance which God in His faithfulness to His covenant granted to them. Whoever is not brought by this severe chastisement to repentance and reformation, but continues opposed to the gracious will of God, on him falls the judgment of death; and only they who turn themselves to the Lord, their God and Saviour, will be saved, gathered from among the heathen, brought in within the bonds of the covenant of grace through Christ, and become partakers of the promised riches of grace in His kingdom.³

With these things in mind it is apparent why God should inspire the writing of such a book as Daniel. *Every chapter of the book promises ultimate vindication and deliverance for those who are faithful in the midst of heathenism. Each*

chapter contains the motif of trial and trouble climaxed by elevation and glory.⁵ Thus the good news that tribulation issues in blessing for those obedient to Yahweh is continually sounded forth. For example, note the following:

Chapter One The remnant tested over fidelity to the law of God. Those who are faithful are promoted to the palace of the king.

Chapter Two The wise among God's people survive the threat of death (v. 13), prove themselves superior to those who know not God, and are elevated to positions of rulership.

Chapter Three The saints are tested again, this time more severely. Being found faithful to the commandments of Yahweh, they experience His deliverance from a time of trouble, then are made to prosper as the result of further promotion by the king (v. 30).

Chapter Four The idolatrous king who defies Yahweh by his pride is warned and then debased. With repentance came restoration (v. 34) and return to the throne. Here was a promise that God would bless even the heathen who acknowledged Him.

Chapter Five A heathen king by blasphemy passes the point of no return. Judged, then condemned, he loses all. In contrast the messenger of God is exalted to a position of authority (v. 29).

Chapter Six The hardest test of all comes to Daniel in his old age. He is found free from any "ground for complaint" except "in connection with the law of his God." This death threat also fails, and the prophet experiences deliverance from a night of trial. As a result, "this Daniel prospered."

Most of the historical section of Daniel deals with Babylon and its attributes of intolerance, idolatry, pride, persecution, blasphemy. Thus the narratives prefigure the prophetic pictures of spiritual Babylon, which on a larger scale perpetuates such attributes. In the first half of the book we are given just one vignette from the days

of the second world empire—just enough to show that the root of Babylonian principles existed in the later powers.

As the typical example, from the prophetic section of Daniel we note that chapter 7 has for its theme the heathen powers that tread down the land of Israel and its people. Special emphasis is given to the antichrist of the fourth kingdom, even him who was typified by Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and the rulers of Medo-Persia. In this chapter the suffering saints, represented by the Son of man, inherit at last the everlasting kingdom—the reward for their fidelity during "a time, two times, and half a time" of tribulation. Thus the theme is the same as in the first half of Daniel—the saints are tested, the heathen apparently triumph, but God intervenes, vindicates His people in judgment, and elevates them to everlasting joy.

Thus the chapters all tell the same story with emphasis upon trial, vindication, and reward. The remaining prophetic chapters enlarge what has been depicted in Dan 7, and the closing section of the book (ch. 12) recapitulates the themes and climaxes with promises of glory for those who, like Daniel, are faithful to the one true God (see vs. 7, 10, 13, 1-3).

Further evidence of the central theme of Daniel is found in its literary structure, as the next section indicates.

⁵ Commentators vary slightly in their interpretation of the name of the prophet. "God is judge," "God has judged," "God is my judge"—all have representatives. Everything depends on whether the yod within the name is to be considered as a connective or as a pronominal suffix. Dogmatism as to which is correct is impossible. The main idea, however, of God as judge is indisputable.

⁶ Keil, p. 5.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 9, 10.

⁹ Some of the remarks of A. Bentzen on the significance of the historical chapters are worthy of study, though he regards the accounts as legendary.

Literary Structure of the Book With the Key Verse Thus Indicated

Broadly speaking, the Book of Daniel divides into two sections: the first six chapters of narrative, and the last six chapters where visions are primary. Visions are not entirely lacking from the first section, and historical narrative is present in the second, but the emphasis is as suggested. *Each narrative climaxes in the elevation of the worshipers of the true God, and each vision in the establishment of the kingdom of God.* The former is the type of the latter.

The prologue or first chapter introduces all the themes that subsequent stories and prophecies elucidate. The epilogue or last chapter draws all the threads together. The first chapter tells of the apparent destruction of the kingdom of God on earth, and the last tells of its restoration forever.

Another feature of the literary structure should not escape us. Chapter 2 presents visionary symbols and their interpretation; chapter 7 does the same; likewise chapter 8. But then apocalyptic symbolism as hitherto used is dropped. Note the words of Frost and Montgomery: "In the third [vision] the imagery is laid aside. . . . The Fourth Vision, the last and longest of them all, drops the symbolism entirely."¹ "The symbolical disappears in the midst of the vision in c. 8, and after that there are only spoken oracles."² "C. 8 has its symbolism. . . . This disappears in c. 9, an angelic

announcement taking its place, while the substance of the final vision is absolutely unpicturesque."³

Montgomery's reference to "the symbolical disappearing in the midst of the vision in c. 8" points us to the fact that *8:14 is the high point of the symbolism of the book.* The mystical words are pronounced, "'For two thousand and three hundred evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary shall be restored.'" We then hear the admonition: "'Gabriel, make this man understand the vision.'" Now *immediately the explanation begins, which is continued in 9:24-27 and enlarged upon in chapters 10 to 12.* Thus, after the last vision with apocalyptic symbolism such as multihorned or -headed animals—that is to say, after 8:1-14—the rest of the book is explanatory of this climactic vision.

Verse 14 of chapter 8 is remarkable also in other ways. The verb (shall be cleansed, KJV) used appears in this form (Niph'al use) only once in the Old Testament, though its root is found about five hundred times. Furthermore, the word enshrines the theme of vindication so central to the entire book. It is a term having "forensic sense," as Strong says, being closely linked to the ideas of judgment and deliverance. There is practically no commentator who fails to use this word in

explicating the teaching of the volume.⁴

In no other place is a length of time stated so enigmatically. Historical periods beyond a year are never thus set forth in days.⁵ The reference to the sanctuary in that connection is also of interest as it joins together both the narrative and prophetic portions of the book. From the very commencement the sanctuary is seen as a microcosm of the kingdom of God. Nebuchadnezzar profanes it in chapter 1 and Belshazzar in chapter 5. In the vision of 7, 8, 9, 11, and 12 the sanctuary is repeatedly in view as the subject of antichrist's attacks and the symbol of Yahweh's restored kingdom.⁶

Thus in several ways 8:14 is shown by its literary characteristics to be the key verse of the book.⁷ It is fitting, therefore, that this commentary should give it special emphasis in harmony with the promise of 12:4.

⁴ S. B. Frost, *Old Testament Apocalyptic, Its Origins and Growth* (London: The Epworth Press, 1952), p. 183.

⁵ James A. Montgomery, *The International Critical Commentary: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Book of Daniel* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1927), p. 102.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 96. (See also J. D. Prince's remarks on chapter 8 in his *Critical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*.)

⁷ Heaton, Montgomery, Pfeiffer, etc.

⁸ H. G. Guinness in his comments on 8:14 writes: "Not a passage can be found in the Bible in which a period exceeding a year, is stated in days—and only two, in which a period exceeding two months is so mentioned (except of course those in which these symbolic dates occur). . . . The real form of the expression indicates more mystery. . . . That a long period is intended appears, from the angel's words, 'shut up the vision, for it shall be for many days.' Now six or seven years is but a brief period in our estimation, how much less in an angel's? Gabriel would not thus have spoken of so short an interval. But if the period intended were twenty-three centuries, his words have an appropriate dignity" (*The Approaching End of the Age*, [London: Hodder and Staughton, 1880], pp. 316, 317).

⁹ The promise of the restoration of the sanctuary was a promise of the Messianic kingdom. The temple was a microcosm of the kingdom of God. There were the emblems of His

government and covenant. Skillfully the writer has interwoven repeated references to the sanctuary as background to the promises of the establishment of Yahweh's kingdom of glory. These references occur in both the narrative and the prophetic section of the book. The sanctuary with its abiding Shekinah indicated Yahweh's will to dwell with His people. The writer of Daniel pledges that the shadow is soon to give place to the substance. A new sanctuary is to be anointed as transgression is finished, sin atoned for, and everlasting righteousness brought in. New Testament writers interpret the promise as applying to God's own tabernacling with His people in the palingenesis (Mt 19:28; Rev 21:3). See footnotes on Dan 8.

¹ Much has been said here about the theme of vindication in the Book of Daniel. This theme unifies the various sections of the book, the visions and the narratives. Its emblem is "the Son of man" (a phrase acknowledged by all modern scholars to betoken vindication), but its actual statement is found in 8:14. Here is the one place where the actual term for vindication appears. We wish to underline the fact that this verse strikes the keynote of the book by its reference to vindication is also the climactic point of the symbolism of the book.

Commentators have been far from unanimous as to where a natural division in this book occurs. For example, is chapter 7 to be seen as belonging to the first section of the book or the second? What has not been noticed is that in 8:14 we have a distinct literary dividing point, for this verse terminates the usage of visionary symbols requiring interpretation. Hereafter, all is explanation.

We repeat, 8:14 is the climax of the symbolic "forecasts" of the book. The next verse tells us that Daniel sought to understand this vision. Then he hears a voice saying, "Gabriel, make this man understand the vision." The words of the angel are, "Understand, O son of man. . . ." After this threefold reference to the need for understanding, we have an explanation given of the symbols of chapter 8, except for the climax of that presentation, namely verse 14. Daniel is not told all that is involved in the restoration of the sanctuary. He is told about the kings of Media and Persia, the king of Greece, and the four divisions of that empire. The significance of the little horn is given, but the only reference to "the evenings and the mornings" is that the vision is true and that it should be sealed up. At this point Daniel confesses that he was appalled by what he saw and that he did not understand it. The rest of the book is devoted to explaining in greater detail the vision of chapter 8 (which itself is an enlargement of the vision of chapter 7), particularly its climax regarding the restoration or vindication of the sanctuary.

Both Jeffery and Porteous see in 8:27 a literary device to draw attention to the importance of the revelation found therein. Porteous declares, "Daniel's inability to understand the interpretation is a little odd. It is little more than a device on the part of the author to prepare the way for the highly detailed interpretation of chapter 11" (*Daniel*, p. 130).

The Date of Daniel

The question of the historicity of Daniel was long a storm center in the verbal conflict between theological liberals and conservatives. In the nineteenth century the learned Pusey thundered that "the book of Daniel is . . . either Divine or an imposture,"¹ and a vigorous inspector of Scotland Yard, Sir Robert Anderson, equated the critics with well-known noble beasts when he wrote *Daniel in the Critics Den*. As far as fundamentalists were concerned, they could tell whether a man was a Christian by what he believed about the origin of this Old Testament work!

But readers of the literature on the topic observe a lull in recent years. It seems almost as though the critical scholars have won the field, for there has been little of good quality from conservative writers in this area for almost half a century.² Evangelicals have maintained their traditional belief but acted as though such a position could, like righteousness itself, be held by faith alone. At this present time there is a stirring in certain academic mulberry trees, and the old issues are being raised again by some.

The present writer questions the validity of the attitude of such men as Pusey and Anderson. It is not true to say that all who reject the sixth-century dating of Daniel do so because of antsupernaturalistic bias. Neither is it true to say that to grant the

second-century authorship would be to classify the book as a forgery, and a later date would not empty this influential work of all value or even of prophetic import.

As far back as the Westminster Confession some godly interpreters of Scripture saw Greece as the fourth empire, with Epiphanes as the chief character. And in modern times scholarly conservatives such as Zöckler, Westcott, Lightfoot, Zahn, and more recently G. R. Beasley-Murray have taken the same position. Most of these, but not all, believed in the traditional dating of the book yet held basically to the same framework of interpretation that the proponents of the second-century dating hold. Thus it cannot be said that the later dating is an attempt to avoid the acknowledgment of genuine prediction, though such could indeed be the case for many.³

Second, with our increased understanding of apocalyptic, it is no longer true to suggest that the later date would render this book a forgery. Apocalyptic, as a well-known literary genre, was often characterized by pseudonymity without attempting or achieving deception of the writer's contemporaries. Such an approach, whereby the writer placed himself in the shoes of a famous ancient, is perfectly legitimate as a literary form.

Third, the second-century date would not

render the book valueless. If the situation at that date prefigured later events in connection with the end of the world, as well as communicating basic moral truths, its value would remain, and doubly so, if the New Testament reinterpreted the ancient symbolic outlines. The words of Thomson are significant:

When we look at this double vision [the outlines of chs. 2 and 7], the first thing that strikes us is the unique breadth of view exhibited. If we may for the nonce accept the traditional interpretation, we see the whole course of history, from the days of Nimrod down to the present time, portrayed; nay, beyond the present, on to the millennium and the last judgment. It seems difficult to imagine that a nameless Jew, living in the days of Epiphanes, could devise such a scheme of universal history. It may be answered that, according to the critical hypothesis, he brought down his scheme only to the days of Epiphanes, and that he expected the advent of the Messiah during the persecution of those days. This does not lessen the marvel, but really increases it, that a man, intending to portray, in symbol, history up only to his own day, has given a pictorial representation which has been interpreted by the great majority of those following him—some as near as the very century following that in which he lived—as referring to events that were not in the faintest degree showing above the horizon in his day.

On the hypothesis that he was an inspired prophet, and spoke words full of a significance which he did not grasp himself, this is easily explicable. Only, if this explanation be granted, there is no need for placing Daniel so late as the days of the Maccabees. If the scheme of history he unfolds applies to centuries beyond the days of the Maccabees, these events so portrayed beforehand would be as invisible to the critical pseudo-Daniel living B.C. 160 as to the real Daniel living B.C. 560.⁴

While Thomson errs in supposing that a second-century date for Daniel makes inspiration nonapplicable, the rest of his statement is critically acute. It is because many commentators have believed in the apotelesmatic principle, whereby prophecy can fit a contemporary situation *and* later ones, that some like those previously listed have seen the first fulfillment of the great crisis foretold in Daniel as applying to events of the second century under Antiochus Epiphanes.

That which demonstrates the value of the book, regardless of the view taken regarding its date, is the New Testament endorsement of its stories and visions (see Heb 11:33ff.; Mk 13:14; also the testimony offered by 2 Th 2 and the entire Book of Revelation, which revolves around Danielic motifs). For the believing Christian the Book of Daniel is authoritative as an inspired work, regardless of its date.

Having cleared the air somewhat, let us inquire as to the basic arguments for rejecting the traditional date. They are:

1. Supposed historical inaccuracies.
2. Linguistic features and literary peculiarities.
3. Advanced theological concepts such as a developed angelology and the doctrine of the resurrection.
4. The focus of the prophecies seems to be Antiochus Epiphanes and the crisis he created for the Jews in 168 BC, and therefore the book would have been irrelevant in the sixth century BC.

R. K. Harrison says that "critical scholars have made out an extremely poor case for a Maccabean dating (for example, the summary by S. B. Frost, *IDB*, I, p. 765), and the weaknesses of their position have become even more evident since the discovery of the Qumran manuscripts."⁵ Any modern student reviewing the arguments for the second-century dating is struck by their monotony and frequent lack of pungency. For example, almost all the supposed historical inaccuracies are quibbles that one would expect to encounter in any genuine work of ancient date. Supposed inconsistencies are often merely the product of our ignorance of the times. Most of the ones in Daniel are dealt with in the commentary itself, but we should consider here the main problem—namely the historicity of Darius the Mede.

It is quite true that the name Darius the Mede occurs nowhere in cuneiform literature or other secular accounts of that era. But it is certainly not correct to do as Rowley had done, namely, declare that the account in Daniel is a confused conflation of old traditions.⁶ Rowley based his arguments upon inadequate and misleading secondary sources that failed to distinguish between Ugbaru

and Gubaru, the successive governors of Babylon. (Some evangelical scholars such as J. Whitcomb believe Darius to be another name for Gubaru.) Similarly the critical supposition that there was no such person as Darius ignores the position espoused by Wiseman and others that Darius was another name for Cyrus and that the last verse of chapter 6 should read: "So this Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius, even the reign of Cyrus the Persian." An older position equated Darius with Cyaxares II, the son to Astyages and the father-in-law of Cyrus. Xenophon's details regarding this king are certainly faulty; yet he may be correct in preserving the tradition that Cyaxares was the last Median ruler and Cyrus' close friend.

We do not believe that the issue can yet be settled. But with the parallel instance of Belshazzar, once unknown but now well authenticated, it would be unwise to accuse the Book of Daniel in the present instance. The fondness of the Orientals for giving two names to one person renders possible any of the preceding explanations.

As regards the linguistic problem, one must ever keep in mind the classic statement of the issue. It came from S. R. Driver:

The *Persian* words presuppose a period after the Persian empire had been well established; the Greek words demand, the Hebrew supports, and the Aramaic permits, a date after the conquest of Palestine by Alexander the Great (B.C. 332).⁷

And J. Montgomery, in view of the foregoing, wrote:

The rebuttal of this evidence for a low date lies in the stressing of the potentialities of Gr. influence in the Orient from the 6th cent. and on.⁸

Today we have proof of Greek influence in the Orient long before the sixth century B.C., and thus the old linguistic argument against Daniel has been badly shaken. Furthermore, the discovery at Qumran of the Aramaic Genesis Apocryphon belonging to the first century B.C. has now shattered the old arguments based on the Aramaic of Daniel.

On the first point we would quote Yamauchi:

In reading commentaries on Daniel the writer has been struck by the complete sclerosis of critical thought regarding the date of its composition, and the implications of the Greek words in Daniel for that date. From Driver's classic statement of the linguistic evidence in 1897 to the latest commentary—Norman W. Porteous, *Daniel* (. . . 1965)—there has been no reappraisal of the Maccabean date for Daniel, in spite of the increasing mass of evidence for early contacts between the Aegean and the Near East. The late date of Daniel has come to be one of those "assumptions tidily packaged and put away as being no longer open to question."⁹

On the matter of the Aramaic of Daniel, note the recent review by Gleason L. Archer, Jr.

It would be interesting to speculate on what a spate of discussions would have appeared had the language of the Apocryphon shown noteworthy resemblances to that of Daniel. This would have demonstrated once and for all the soundness of the theory that Daniel was written in the second century B.C. and have refuted the contention of evangelical scholars that it was actually composed in the late sixth century, as it purports to have been. As it turned out, however, the linguistic data proved to point in quite the opposite direction. . . . Here at last we have an authentic Aramaic manuscript, copied out within a century of the supposed publication date of the Book of Daniel, according to the Maccabean Date Theory. Surely it should manifest many and striking points of resemblance in grammar, style, and vocabulary. But in actuality the differences are so striking and essential in all three of these categories as to make it impossible to remain intellectually respectable and still hold to the theory of the Book of Daniel as a Maccabean pseudepigraph.¹⁰

And he concludes:

The *Genesis Apocryphon* furnishes very powerful evidence that the Aramaic of Daniel comes from a considerably earlier period than the second century B.C. The fact that Targumic and Talmudic words abound in this first-century document indicates a considerable interval in time between its composition and that of Ezra and Daniel. Its use of normal Semitic word order in the clause as over against Daniel's tendency to follow a policy of placing the verb late in the clause points to a definite difference either in geographic origin (which would eliminate the possibility of Daniel's Maccabean composition in

Palestine) or in epoch. Either inference is fatal to the pseudopigraph theory. It is fair to say, therefore, that the overall testimony of this scroll leads to abandonment of a long-cherished position of higher criticism, and makes the genuineness of Daniglic authorship of Daniel an even more attractive option than it was before.¹¹

A literary peculiarity in Daniel often criticized is the method in which the prophet refers to himself and his personal relationships (see 1:17, 19; 5:11; 6:4; 9:23; 10:11). These are similar to some of Paul's expressions concerning himself (1 Cor 15:10; 2 Cor 11:5; 12:2). Such comments in Daniel are necessary to fill out the historical picture and to glorify God, who had honored His servant with wisdom. (See commentary on 1:21 for Pusey's comment regarding Daniel's surprising reserve concerning himself.)

Another literary peculiarity is the use of the phrase "the abomination of desolation" which from the time of Nestle has been regarded by most as a paronomasia upon Antiochus and his idol of Zeus. But Ex 23:13 makes it clear that the Hebrews very early used substitute terms for heathen idols. As Price has written:

Since the substitute term here used sounded like "Baal of Heaven," it is obvious that it was no novelty or a term recently invented in the time of the Maccabees. For the connection of the Hebrews with the heathen Baal of Phoenicia dates away back almost to the Exodus itself; it had become an old and well-established acquaintance centuries before the Captivity.¹²

The third area of objections to Daniel concerns the supposedly advanced theological concepts. This criticism usually has its origin in an evolutionary concept of theological development rather than in the Biblical evidence. Angelology, for example, seems similarly well-developed in Ezekiel and in Zechariah, and angels in the latter assume the same function as in Daniel—namely the interpretation of visions. The angelology of Daniel is not akin to late apocalyptic works such as 1 Enoch. Neither is the concept of resurrection entirely missing from the rest of the Old Testament. The reason for its rare occurrence is indicated in 2 Ti 1:10. A demonstrative word in

the future life came only with its Great Exemplar.

Before proceeding to the major objection that the book chiefly concerns the times of Antiochus Epiphanes, we should allude briefly to certain minor objections which do not fall into any of the four chief categories we have listed.

It is objected that the Jews did not place Daniel among the prophets but, instead, in the Hagiographa, the third and last part of the Hebrew canon. Not until the translation of the LXX was Daniel placed with the prophets. The reason for this peculiarity is not hard to find. Daniel, like David and Solomon, was not a prophet by virtue of his office and calling, but he possessed the prophetic gift. It is therefore correct to say with Delitzsch, Keil, Witsius, and many recent scholars that Daniel was endowed with the *gift* of prophecy indeed, but not with the prophetic *office*.¹³ Says Keil:

The place occupied by this book in the Hebrew canon perfectly corresponds with the place of Daniel in the theocracy. Daniel did not labour, as the rest of the prophets did, . . . as a prophet among his people in the congregation of Israel, but he was a minister of state under the Chaldean and Medo-Persian world rulers.¹⁴

A related objection to the foregoing is the apparent silence regarding the existence of the book prior to the times of the LXX.¹⁵ In answer to this contention one should first remember that the literature of the period near to the traditional date of Daniel is not extensive, neither is it of such a character as lends itself to the act of quotation.

The prophets may be regarded from the literary side of their works as poets. Poets do not make frequent references to contemporary poets. Tennyson and Browning have both left voluminous poetical remains behind them, yet we doubt if the one refers so much as once to the other.¹⁶

Nevertheless, many scholars have shown that a literary relationship does exist between Daniel and certain canonical and noncanonical works predating the Maccabean crisis. The very fact that Daniel was included in the LXX indicates that it had long been known prior to that time. The Jews were not lacking in critical acumen, and to suppose that they would be deceived by a recent work

purporting to be an ancient one is asking too much. Neither should we conclude that they were as used to the practice of pseudonymity as in later times. The translators regarded the book as prophetic rather than historical.

But the main explanation of this situation probably resides in the unusual and unwelcome content of Daniel's prophecies. Unlike the oracles from the former seers of Israel, these foretold a period of severe tribulation. Jews of the sixth century BC and later hoped that the Exile had finished their divine chastisement, and the word from Daniel was unwelcome as it pointed to greater troubles still to come. (A similar reason retarded the general acceptance into the canon of the Christian apocalypse.) With the coming of the crisis under the Syrian tyrant, however, the attitude to Daniel was naturally reversed. The political and religious events of the day seemed to illustrate the meaning of Daniel's prophecies, and faithful Jews now gloried in the book which some of their predecessors regarded with caution. This same explanation may contribute to the solution of the former question regarding the exclusion of Daniel from the prophets by the Hebrew Bible, though not by the LXX. Josephus makes a statement regarding the closing of the canon in the time of Artaxerxes, but this applies to the writing of the sacred books rather than their collection.

Before giving attention to the fourth area of criticism against the traditional date for Daniel—that the *prophecies* focus on the times of Antiochus Epiphanes—we wish to stress that the *historical* chapters contain many things that militate against such a view.

First, we would point out that in contrast to scholars such as H. L. Ginsberg (who sees at least six authors behind Daniel), many now follow H. H. Rowley in postulating a single author for the book, one who gathered older materials and fashioned a unified presentation. Rowley's comments are most significant as he refers to the arguments adduced by some to support a plurality of authors for Daniel, and then proceeds to give his own reasons for supporting a single composer of the whole.

The effective answers to many of the arguments

can be found in the case for others of these divisive views.¹⁷

When the links of style and outlook, which are so clearly acknowledged that the theories of glossing have been so extensively resorted to, are added to the community of error, the case for the unity of authorship is a strong one. The stock argument against it is just that touch of looseness and inconcinnity which is really the strongest argument for it. Community of error can be accounted for by borrowing; but a quality of mind, or mental habit, is not so easily borrowed. Hence the fact that this is found in the oft-severed parts of the book is of the first significance. Not less so is the difficulty of finding any clear division, since the threefold test of language, form, and presumptive authorship yields different results, while chapter 7 will continue to embarrass the dissectors by its refusal to be assigned to either half alone. . . . Nothing that can be seriously called proof of compositeness has been produced. On the other hand, evidence for the unity of the work that in its totality amounts to a demonstration is available.¹⁸

If the book belongs to the second century BC, we have every ground for expecting what critical liberal scholars have often underlined—namely that the historical chapters as well as the prophetic will have the times of the Maccabees in view. Bevan, Heaton, and others have emphasized this, drawing on the evidence from the first six chapters to show that loyalty to the Torah is the virtue here exemplified, a virtue much to be desired in the times of Antiochus.

But the *dissimilarities* between the times described in chapters 1-6 and the days of the Maccabees have been ignored. What loyal Jew in the mid-second century BC could have brought himself to write of a patriot who willingly served heathen kings! Such conduct was anathema to the faithful who resisted the Syrian oppressors.

Consider the characters assigned to Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and Darius. Their *unlikeness* to Antiochus has often called forth comment. Nebuchadnezzar, despite his vices, is open to conviction. He confesses his ill conduct and reverences Daniel's God. Even Belshazzar honors the Jewish messenger of evil tidings rather than vent his rage on the unfortunate emissary of the gods. As for Darius, he is obviously attached to Daniel and longs to see him delivered. None of

these monarchs correspond to that "vile" person Epiphanes. Thomson discusses the apparent regard that Daniel had for Nebuchadnezzar and his reluctance to see the omen of the dream in chapter 4 fulfilled.

It is obvious that Daniel had a high personal esteem for the splendid tyrant. . . . When in the king's dream he sees his coming madness, "he was astonished one hour," and had to be reassured by the king before he could tell the dread interpretation. Then the words burst from him, "My lord, the dream be to them that hate thee"; . . . and is anxious that by repentance the king may attain a lengthening of his tranquillity. Can any one, reading the Books of the Maccabees, imagine a zealous Jew picturing his model saint maintaining an attitude like that toward Epiphanes?¹⁹

The events in the first six chapters, as well as the characters, contrast with the crisis of the Maccabean era.

The Book of Daniel could not have been written merely to encourage the Jews in their struggle against Epiphanes. The incidents narrated are not such as would be naturally fitted to fire people to resist the behests of a tyrant with force of arms. For that purpose the stories of the Book of Judges were far better fitted. If anything may be supposed to be inculcated by the incidents in the Book of Daniel, it is passive resistance. . . . The course followed by Mattathias and his sons was in direct contrast with this.²⁰

Thomson gives some specific examples of the contrast between the stories of Daniel and the events between 168 and 165 BC.

The dream of the second chapter has no parallel event in the history of Antiochus. Certainly Antiochus erected idols as Nebuchadnezzar is related in Dan. iii. to have done, but the peculiar heinousness of the action of Epiphanes was that he erected the statue in the courts of Jehovah's temple and over his altar. Nothing of the kind is ascribed to Nebuchadnezzar. The peculiarities again of the idol of Nebuchadnezzar—its height, its position, its gilding—the statue of Antiochus did not possess. There is nothing in the history of Antiochus like the fiery furnace. . . . Antiochus further wished to compel a nation to abandon its religion; Nebuchadnezzar never had any such mad project in his mind. . . . Neither the

dreams of Dan. iv. nor the madness of Nebuchadnezzar are paralleled by anything which is recorded of Antiochus. . . . There is nothing in the history of Antiochus that at all corresponds to the story of Darius and his decree and the condemnation of Daniel to the den of lions.²¹

Several liberal scholars have been honest enough to recognize the disparities we have listed. Eissfeldt, Montgomery, Von Rad, and others have insisted repeatedly that chapters 1-6 of Daniel, at least in essence, belong to much earlier times than 165 BC. Such admissions are significant, indeed, particularly when we add to them the further admissions that even the prophetic chapters may also have their origin from earlier literary fragments.

Thus while it is often objected that inasmuch as the prophets addressed themselves primarily to the crises of their own times rather than to events centuries off, and that therefore Daniel must have been written about 165 BC, it needs to be stressed that both the narratives and the visions of Daniel match the crisis of the sixth century even better in some respects than they do the later crisis. In fact, within the book itself the later events of tragedy for Israel are modeled on the attacks from Babylon in the seventh and ninth centuries (see 11:16, 40-45). At that time an impious persecutor had come from the north and suspended the sanctuary services, doing despite to the visible emblems of the theocracy. Right at the time when Daniel claims to have been written, a theodicy was called for. The book's insistence on the final triumph of the divine kingdom provided just what was needed, and inasmuch as Jerusalem's fate in 586 BC, rather than its experience in 168-165 BC, began the dissolution of the theocracy, the requisite apologetic was then more timely than four centuries later. Says Keil:

The situation into which Israel fell by the carrying away into Babylon was so grievous and so full of afflictions, that the earnest-minded and the pious even might despair, and doubt the covenant faithfulness of God. The predictions by the earlier prophets of their deliverance from exile, and their return to the land of their fathers after the period of chastisement had passed by, served to prevent their sinking into despair or falling away into heathenism,

amid the sufferings and oppressions to which they were exposed. . . . Divine actions must be added to the word of promise, which gave assurance of its fulfillment—wonderful works, which took away every doubt that the Lord could save the true confessors of His name out of the hand of their enemies, yea, from death itself. To these actual proofs of the divine omnipotence, if they would fully accomplish their purpose, new disclosures regarding the future must be added, since, . . . after the expiry of the seventy years, . . . the glorification of the kingdom of God by the Messiah, which was connected by all the earlier prophets . . . with the return from Babylon, did not immediately appear, nor was the theocracy restored in all its former integrity, but Israel must remain yet longer under the domination and the oppression of the heathen.²²

Thus the necessity for such a work as Daniel. Zöckler and Kranichfeld assert similarly as they speak of the prophetic portions:

The Hebrew text . . . contains *only* prophecies, which are . . . exclusively of a *comforting* nature.²³

[They are designed] . . . to comfort the Hebrew people in the trying political circumstances under which they are either newly engaged in arranging their affairs in Palestine, or are still languishing in the land of the exile. In view of the fact that to the human understanding the duration of this trying condition is unknown, they present the assurance that the continued and increasing tribulations, which must keep pace with the moral corruption of heathendom, are *designed by God for the purifying of the faithful* (cf. chap. xi. 35; xii. 10), and *cannot be imposed a single day beyond what He has determined*.²⁴

Having shown that the message of the book exactly fits the times of the exile and beyond, and therefore conforms to the usual prophetic practice of addressing contemporaries, we now turn to the discussion of the contrasting interpretations of those passages which claim to be predictive.

First, underline the increasing trend of admission that even the prophetic portions of Daniel contain much which originated before the second century BC. Says Eissfeldt:

In short, there is no doubt whatever that the visions of vii–xii are largely based upon older and even much older elements, and they only become fully intelligible when their prehistory is illuminated.²⁵

Statements of this nature could be multiplied. Anyone who contends that every critical scholar believes all of Daniel to have been devised in the Maccabean era has not done his homework.

The Maccabean Interpretation

Scholars who contend for the Maccabean date must face two problems among others. The first has to do with the interpretation of 9:24–27, and the second with the identification of the four kingdoms of chapters 2 and 7. Our first attention will be devoted to the Maccabean interpretation of the seventy weeks in 9:24–47.

Liberal scholars agree that the seventy weeks are weeks of years but that the total should not be considered as precisely 490 years. Most applications of the outline take in approximately 440 years and some much less. The commandment spoken of in 9:25 is usually understood as an allusion to one of the prophecies of Jeremiah. Some elect Jer 25; others, chapters 30 and 31. Thus dates selected are usually 605 BC or 588 BC.²⁶

The first messiah named in the prophecy is a reference to either Cyrus or the Joshua of the Restoration; the second messiah, the one "cut off," is Seleucus IV Philopator, or the former Jewish high priest Onias III, in their way of thinking.

The last week of the seventy is supposed to revolve around the exploits of Antiochus—the first half comprehending his alliance with apostate Jews, and the second involving the persecution of the faithful in Israel.

Montgomery refers to this passage as "the Dismal Swamp of O. T. criticism."²⁷ On the contrary we believe it to be, when rightly understood, a virtual Paradise. Verse 24 is one of the most sublime passages in the Old Testament. It points to the abolition of sin and guilt, the establishment of everlasting righteousness, and the ultimate dwelling of God with His people.²⁸ To view it as merely a pious hope associated with the reestablishment of the sanctuary services after Antiochus Epiphanes is to restrict its perspective without legitimate reason. The following points summarize our critique of the Maccabean interpretation.

1. To interpret as liberal critics do "the going forth of the word to restore and build Jerusalem" as being a prophetic message from Jeremiah requires not only a rejection of the bearing of parallel passages of similar wording but also an imagination of sufficient power to transmute prophetic passages descriptive of ruin into divine commands of restoration. Dan 2:13 uses the Aramaic equivalent of this expression in 9:25, and 9:23 uses the identical words. In both cases the meaning is obviously that of the pronouncement and enactment of a royal command.²⁹ Jer 25 is dated as belonging to the fourth year of Jehoiakim (605 BC), but its burden is the impending ruin of Jerusalem, not its restoration. Jer 30-31 is not dated, and it consists of a prophetic oracle of hope—not of a pronouncement or enactment of a divine decree.

Furthermore, the position that the first seven weeks of years begin with the enunciation of Jeremiah's warnings regarding Jerusalem's destruction turns the Danielic prophecy on its head. Daniel affirms that the first seven weeks of years shall encompass rebuilding and restoration, whereas the message from Jeremiah was to the effect that seventy years of ruin and desolation would attend the backsliding people. We must ask, "How could 490 years allotted to the holy city from the time of its commenced reconstruction include 70 years of desolation?" The starting point of the Maccabean interpretation is thus not sound exegetically, and the situation is identical with the terminal point and the period between the two, as shall be demonstrated.

2. Our second criticism is that the time periods just do not fit the events suggested by the proponents of the Maccabean dating. We do not need to argue this point at length, for all interpreters admit the fact. If the seventy weeks of years commence in 605 BC, or alternatively in 538 BC, the terminus of neither the 69 weeks or the 70 coincides with the time of Antiochus. The gap does not consist of a few years only, but on any calculation, involves at least the greater part of a century. For example, we read from one typical expositor: "The 62 weeks of years, or 434 years, . . . are too many by far; from 538 to 171 (the next date) is only 367 years."³⁰

It hardly seems enough to say, as is usually suggested, that knowledge of chronology in the Maccabean era was exceedingly fragmentary. The same interpreters argue that the intimate knowledge of events displayed by chapter 11 indicates that the record was written after those events. If then the writer had such intimate knowledge of what had happened in the centuries prior to Antiochus, was it only in the area of chronology that his knowledge failed him? This is a possible situation, indeed, but hardly a likely one.³¹

3. Verse 26 of chapter 9 forecasts (or apparently so) the destruction of the city and the sanctuary as by an overwhelming flood. Even if the latter figure is applied to the fate of the invader, there can be no dodging the ensuing words that "to the end there shall be war; desolations are decreed." In other words the city is to lie in ruins, and the sanctuary likewise. This did not transpire in the days of Antiochus.

In response to this criticism it is usually urged that the Hebrew word *shachath*, here translated "destroy," can also mean "corrupt." The observation is legitimate but its application in this place is not, because of the ensuing reference to "desolations," i.e., "ruins." Furthermore, parallel passages in chapters 8 and 11 use terms descriptive of physical violence.³²

The context of this passage, Daniel's prayer, revolves around the theme of the ruined city, and the hope of the pious for its restoration. A close study of verses 24-27 shows that many of the key terms found therein are duplicated in the prayer of the prophet which precedes.³³ This gives weight to the presumption that the word translated "destroy" means precisely that, for the words of Gabriel concern the content of Daniel's previous entreaty.

4. The great theme of the passage is Christ and His kingdom, not antichrist in the form of Antiochus or anyone else. While verse 25 literally speaks of "an anointed one, a prince," its context shows that One who is to be both an anointed priest and king is the One who implements the grand promises of the immediately preceding lines, and does so by being "cut off." This same Messiah the Prince "shall make a strong covenant with many for one week."³⁴ The term "covenant" in

Daniel always applies to a divine arrangement, never to a human agreement, unless this is the exception. Furthermore, the Hebrew does not use the usual expression "cut a covenant" but rather employs a term meaning "to confirm" (KJV). Thus the covenant is one already in existence. The expression "many" is possibly an allusion to the "many" spoken of in Isa 53 who are to be made righteous by the Servant of Yahweh. Scholars recognize that Daniel often quotes from the gospel prophet, and this is probably one such instance.³⁵

Rejection of the passage as applying to Christ demands an alternative position of merit. What is offered? The usual interpretation is that Onias III is here spoken of. However, at the time of his death he was not a high priest. Thus, he could not be spoken of as "the anointed one" unless by retrospect. His priesthood had ceased years earlier. Similarly, he could hardly be viewed as a prince or king of his people at the time of his assassination. In addition it should be noted that the Maccabean record of the death of Onias shows Antiochus in an unusually favorable light. He is represented as being upset by the crime rather than glorying in it.³⁶

5. Many have recognized that the narrative sections of Daniel cast light on the meaning of the visions.³⁷ In this instance the accompanying narrative presents a righteous prophet who loves his sinful people and intercedes for them, imputing their sins to himself. He pleads for forgiveness and restoration, the fulfillment of the covenant promises. It is readily seen how this context suits a Messianic interpretation of the prophetic passage which succeeds the prayer. But it in no wise fits an interpretation that views Antiochus Epiphanes as the central figure of fulfillment.

6. Christ Himself interpreted this passage in the only lengthy discourse on prophetic matters found in the Gospels. A multitude of commentators have recognized that Christ's Olivet sermon is based upon Dan 9:24-27.³⁸ This is the only place in Daniel where the reference to the abomination of desolation is clearly linked with the destruction of the holy city. Note the following words from Christ:

"Do you see these great buildings? There will not

be left here one stone upon another, that will not be thrown down."

"When you see the desolating sacrilege set up ['spoken of by Daniel the prophet,' KJV] where it ought not to be (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; . . . for in those days there will be such tribulation as has not been from the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never will be" (Mk 13:2, 14-19).

Christ did not say that the events of which He spoke would be another later fulfillment of Daniel's words. But *that* spoken of by Daniel the prophet is here intended—the very event so foretold. Christ even uses one of the key words of Daniel, *understand* (found over a score of times in the Old Testament book), which in its Hebrew equivalent is present in the prophecy of Dan 9 (i.e., v. 23). (To say, as many do, that "let the reader understand" belongs in parentheses inserted by Mark is to suggest that this instance is unique in the Gospel record. Nowhere else in the Synoptic tradition do we find Christ's words thus interrupted by commentary.)

There can be no denying that Christ Himself had meditated on the very passage which now concerns us, and He did not associate it with the times of Antiochus but rather projected it to the future.

Karl Heim's words regarding the use of Daniel made by Christ are particularly pertinent to our study of 9:24-27.

The reply that Jesus gave the High Priest at this moment pregnant of destiny contained in concise form a view into the future which is of the greatest import. For hereby Jesus clearly confessed himself to be the "Son of man" prophesied in the book of Daniel, that is to say the Man in whom after the end of the four Empires (which all have an animal character) true humanity will fulfil itself and the Kingdom will be established. . . .

The most important point about this is that at least in its main features Jesus accepts the vision of the future of the world given by Daniel. For He solemnly adopts the principal part in the final act of the cosmic drama seen in the book of Daniel. . . . For the import of this solemn declaration by Jesus it is immaterial whether the author of Daniel lived about 600 B.C. under Jehoiakim in the Babylonian exile, as he says

himself, or whether the book was written in the first half of the second century B.C. in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes. The truth of the prophecy does not depend on when it was first announced.³⁹

We may not agree with Heim's second to last sentence, but we would not quarrel with the rest.

So much for the Maccabean interpretation of Daniel 9 and alternative Messianic understanding. We have not taken the space in this brief refutation to argue every point that can emerge in a discussion in this area, but we have endeavored to indicate where the weight of the evidence lies. The interpretation criticized is admittedly, to quote a Maccabean proponent, "a dismal swamp." The alternative is a paradisaical bed of lilies.

The Four Kingdoms

Most scholars who contend for the late date understand the successive kingdoms of chapters 2 and 7 as Babylon (head of gold and the lion); Media (breast and arms of silver and the bear); Persia (stomach of brass and the leopard); and Greece (legs of iron and the nondescript beast). This interpretation thus equates the ram of Dan 8 with the bear and leopard of the preceding chapter and the he-goat with the nondescript beast possessing ten horns. The little horn in both chapters 7 and 8 represents Antiochus Epiphanes only. The ten horns of the fourth beast of chapter 7 represent successive kings of Syria prior to Antiochus.

Some who have seen the impossibility of making Media and Persia separate kingdoms select the sequence as follows: Babylon; Medo-Persia; Greece under Alexander; Alexander's successors—the Diadochi.⁴⁰

While this scheme concerning the second kingdom is more faithful to the facts, it flies in the face of other plain scriptures regarding the last two powers. Scripture expressly says concerning the successors of Alexander and their kingdoms that they will be considerably less in strength than Alexander and his kingdom (see 8:22 and 11:4).

Pusey summarizes the weaknesses of the various liberal positions of the four kingdoms and simultaneously demonstrates the strength of the traditional viewpoint that the four empires are

those of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. He says:

If the Greek Empire is to be the fourth Empire, which are the other three? The sum must be made up, though one of the items is withdrawn. 1, 1, 1, and 0 have somehow to be made 4. . . . No one can dispute that there are four empires. How then is the subtracted fourth to be replaced? The process has been tried upon all the remaining three. Two halves are somehow to become two wholes. Only, agreed as this school is as to the result, they have been nothing less than [i.e., everything but] agreed as to the process whereby it is to be arrived at. Every possible combination has been tried.⁴¹

Pusey lists the attempts and then continues:

Now, of these theories, (as happens so often) each concedes by turns so much of the truth as it can afford. Out of the four theories, the adherents of three concede or contend that the Babylonian Empire in its integrity is one entire Empire; three maintain the same as to the Medo-Persian; three, as to Alexander and his successors. So that the traditional interpretation of, I may say, both the Jewish and the Christian Church, nay, of the Heathen world before Christ, has, in each case, the support of three out of the four parties, which oppose it. No one for a moment hesitates to admit whatever, in order to make out his case, he is not constrained to deny. Each in turn opposes the other, just as much as the old established explanation.⁴²

The following critique deals with the most popular form of the liberal position, which views the four kingdoms of Daniel as Babylon, Media, Persia, and Greece.⁴³ The following points summarize our case:

1. The second-century dating of the book postulates successive Median and Persian empires in the thinking of the author of Daniel, but the book itself reveals no such belief. Indeed, it shows the opposite.

In both the historical and prophetic sections of the book, Medo-Persia is shown as a dual empire. In the wordplay of 5:28 the significant word is *peres*, indicating that Babylon was to be succeeded by a power predominantly Persian, not Median. And in the next chapter we find Darius the Mede bound by the law of the Medes and Persians (see 6:8, 12, 15). For the same viewpoint in the

prophetic section we have 8:20—one animal with two horns.

Because Cyrus and the rulers after him were Persians in the Medo-Persian realm, it is naturally spoken of *subsequently* as the Persian kingdom, but the writer never speaks of a separate Median empire.

2. *The symbolism itself strongly supports the traditional interpretation.* The ram in its clumsy firmness has an affinity with the bear, just as the he-goat which touched not the ground is reminiscent of the same agility in the fleet leopard with four wings spoken of in the preceding chapter. And if the he-goat and the leopard represent the identical power of Greece, the whole Maccabean view disintegrates.

Similarly, the same concept is conveyed by the bear that so raised itself in order to show two sides, and the ram likewise with its two horns indicated the same truth. Even a child can readily recognize the parallelism of the symbolism. In each portrayal the symbol for the power succeeding Babylon is a single entity but possessing a manifest dualism. And if the bear and the ram each represents Medo-Persia, then the leopard, and not the nondescript beast of ten horns, must point to Greece, and the most dreadful characterization of all in the fourth beast must indicate the Roman Empire. This succession alone is consistent with the undeniable fact that the fourth kingdom is represented as incomparably more powerful than its predecessors.

3. Again, the number four linked with the leopard (four wings and four heads) is also linked with the he-goat, which is actually named as Greece. It is *not* found in the description of the last of the beasts in Dan 7. Once more the equivalence of the leopard and the he-goat is indicated and grave doubt cast on the Maccabean scheme of empires. It is correct to speak of the Greek world being divided into four for a period, but it is not correct to speak of the Persian realm in that manner, yet according to the Maccabean theory the leopard with its four heads represents Persia rather than Greece. According to this position, the writer of the visions has spoken of the fourfold division in chapter 8, but in chapter 7 he has substituted a tenfold division. The fourth kingdom

can hardly be divided into both ten and four major sections.

4. As we consider the fourth empire we find its distinctive feature in the ten horns from among which another little horn emerges, plucking up three of the ten. How does the Maccabean theory of authorship explain this? It is contended that the Syrian kings are represented by the horns, and various enumerations are offered in support. We would not quarrel with the contrasting lists, for the traditional interpretation has these also. The significant point is that none of the lists actually presents us with ten kings but usually offers us aspirants to the throne to make up the number. Ptolemy IV and Demetrius Soter are in this category. The three plucked up are usually submitted as being Heliogorus, Demetrius, and Seleucus Philopator. However, Antiochus certainly did not uproot the first of these.

5. Next it should be noted that the passage in Dan 7 implies that the ten horns represent ten *contemporaneous* kingdoms. Wherever a successive power is intended, the symbolism makes the fact plain (see 7:8; 8:3, 8). But the Maccabean theory calls for *successive* kings as fulfilling the symbolism of the ten horns of the fourth beast. Let it also be added that if the three plucked up by the eleventh horn are necessarily his contemporaries, it follows that the seven also must be, for together they constitute the ten of the textual picture. However, the position we are contesting calls for seven *successive* kings, then three *contemporaneous* ones. One cannot help but feel that here is a case of "heads I win, and tails you lose," a very learned stratagem for having one's cake, yet eating it too.

6. It should also be considered that horns in Daniel represent *kingdoms* primarily, rather than kings. The latter are mentioned only as representative of the former, but a single horn points to a particular kingdom much more than to a particular king. Dan 8:5, 8 represents the kingdom of Alexander in contrast to the four kingdoms that succeeded it. Thus, it is incongruous indeed to affirm that the four horns of chapter 8 indeed signify the kingdoms which were contemporaneous after Alexander's reign and yet also hold that the ten horns of the fourth beast in the preceding

chapter represent ten successive kings of a single kingdom.

7. In addition, the drastic restriction of the meaning of the horns of the fourth beast of Dan 7 to the territory of Syria alone, after granting the universal nature of the dominion of the beast possessing the horns, is a strange exegesis. We would expect rather that the ten horns pointed to ten divisions of the universal kingdom rather than to a succession of rulers in one minor section only of the great empire. There are some even of the Maccabean school of interpreters who rank Alexander as the first of the ten horns, thus making him the peer of his succeeding nonentities, although in chapter 8 his kingdom is distinctly characterized as superior to the divisions which followed.⁴⁴

The writer cheerfully confesses that despite his reading of much of the literature on this subject produced in the past hundred years, there are yet many areas where he seeks further information. But to wait for assurance of a particular truth till every objection has been exhausted and every possible support mustered is an impractical venture. Let us here, as in other matters, take our stand on the weight of evidence. And as we do so, let us remind ourselves that we stand where Christ and the New Testament writers stood in acknowledging the historicity of Daniel the prophet and the inspiration of his book in the sixth century BC.

⁴⁴ Pusey, p. 75.

⁴⁵ But see Roland Kenneth Harrison's defense in his *Introduction to the Old Testament*, and the Tyndale presentation, *Notes on Some Problems in the Book of Daniel*, ed. D. Wiseman.

⁴⁶ Some like Lagrange believe that the prophecies apply antitypically to the antichrist. See *Revue Biblique* 13:494. Antiochus is seen as the first focus.

⁴⁷ Thomson, pp. 220, 221.

⁴⁸ Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1969), p. 1123.

⁴⁹ Harold Henry Rowley, *Darius the Mede and the Four World Empires in the Book of Daniel* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press Board, 1935).

⁵⁰ S. R. Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1931), p. 508. Modern scholars do not grant much weight to arguments based on the Persian or Hebrew forms in the book. If anything, these support the traditional dating.

⁵¹ Montgomery, *ICC: Daniel*, p. 22.

⁵² Edwin M. Yamauchi, *Greece and Babylon* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1967), p. 13.

⁵³ Gleason L. Archer, Jr., "The Aramaic of the 'Genesis Apocryphon' Compared With the Aramaic of Daniel," *New Perspectives on the Old Testament*, ed. J. Barton Payne (Waco: Word Books, 1970), pp. 160, 161.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 169. Comments of a similar nature growing out of recent developments are worthy of study:

a. "If proper allowance be made for attested scribal usage in the Biblical Near East (including orthographical and morphological change, both official and unofficial), then there is nothing to decide the date of composition of the Aramaic of Daniel on the grounds of Aramaic anywhere between the late sixth and the second century BC" (K. A. Kitchen, "The Aramaic of Daniel," *Notes on Some Problems in the Book of Daniel*, p. 79).

b. The 1971 *Encyclopaedia Judaica* in the article on Aramaic by Professor E. Y. Kutscher speaks on the matter as follows:

"S. R. Driver was the first to maintain that Aramaic portions of Ezra and Daniel were written neither in the Aramaic of the fifth and sixth centuries B.C.E. nor in Eastern Aramaic (where they were purported to have come from). Accordingly, he claims that these documents in Ezra must be forgeries. On a basis of comparison with (mainly) the Elephantine texts, the same conclusion was arrived at regarding the Aramaic chapters in Daniel. H. H. Schaefer, however, established that the differences between the Elephantine Aramaic and biblical Aramaic are mainly in the spelling and that in Jerusalem a 'modernization' in the spelling of biblical Aramaic had occurred. This modernization accounts for the differences; consequently there is no basis for the assumption of a forgery. . . . Neither the date nor the origin of these chapters can be determined. But the free word order possibly points to an Eastern origin" (3:266).

c. The facts alluded to by Kutscher probably explain why the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* in 1971, with its new article on the Book of Daniel, drops after many years the argument based on supposedly late Aramaic.

d. In 1946 *Britannica* declared, "Comparison of the language of the sufficiently abundant inscriptions and papyri shows beyond question that the Aramaic of Daniel ii-vii represents a type which cannot possibly be carried back of 300 B.C." (7:20).

e. Compare the conclusion of the 1970 *Britannica* on the same subject. "The Aramaic is inconclusive for a 2nd-century date" (7:51).

f. "Actually, the argument based upon the presence of Greek words turns out to be one of the most compelling evidences of all that Daniel could not have been composed as late as the Greek period. By 170 B.C. a Greek-speaking government had been in control of Palestine for 160 years, and Greek political or

administrative terms would surely have found their way into the language of the subject populace" (Gleason L. Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964), p. 375).

g. One word only has, until recent times, defied explanation, the term *sumphonia*. In extant Greek literature Polybius is the earliest to use this word for a musical instrument, though the word is used earlier in an abstract sense. We now know that the application of this term to a type of "bagpipe" is chiefly based upon a late rabbinic interpretation, and this application has been abandoned by recent commentators. Yamauchi says, on page 19:

"In the general sense of 'harmony' the word is used by Pindar (sixth cent. B.C.) in the *Pythian Ode* I. 70: *damon gerairōn trapon sumphōnōn es asuchian* 'honour the people and prompt them to harmony and peace.' Surely the secondary use of the word to mean harmony in relations presupposes the earlier use of the word in its etymological sense of the harmony of sounds."

In summary Yamauchi says: "It is no longer tenable to maintain that *sumphonia* means 'bagpipe'—a meaning attested only in the second century B.C. In its use in Daniel it may mean 'concerted music' or it may be an adjective modifying the preceding instrument" (*Greece and Babylon*, p. 92). Yamauchi's book has been in print a few years only and is certain to make a strong impact. Its bibliography upon the subject is up-to-date and exhaustive. An article by Dominique Auscher, "Les relations entre la Grèce et la Palestine avant la conquête d'Alexandre," *Vetus Testamentum*, XVII (1967), 8-30, does much to corroborate the positions taken by Yamauchi.

h. It is also significant that although the Jews had many musical instruments of their own, no solely Hebrew instrument is listed as being in the orchestra described in chapter 3. This fully accords with the Babylonian milieu of authorship claimed by the book.

i. In his recent study, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, p. 64, R. K. Harrison writes: "The discovery of portions of Daniel in the Qumran caves has raised once again the question of authorship and date in connection with that book. According to a report by G. E. Wright on three fragments of Daniel recovered from 1Q, two pieces were related palaeographically to 1Q15a, whilst the other had affinities with the script of 1QpHab. The text was substantially the same as the Masoretic, with orthographic variations constituting the principal divergencies. If the relationship between these fragments and the scrolls of Isaiah and Habakkuk from 1Q is genuine, it will inevitably involve an adjustment of the Maccabean date which has been widely assigned to the final form of Daniel within recent years. It may well be that the Book of Daniel will prove to be considerably older than has been alleged by many modern scholars."

¹² Price, p. 184.

¹³ For example, see discussion in Keil, p. 29.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Far too much importance has been attached, for example, to the silence of Jesus ben Sirach in his list of ancient worthies. Ben Sirach had no intention of listing all the writers of the Old Testament. He passed by many of the "greats" of antiquity, including Job and Ezra.

¹⁶ Thomson, p. xxx.

¹⁷ Harold Henry Rowley, *The Servant of the Lord and Other Essays on the Old Testament*, 2nd ed., rev. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965), p. 260. Charles Driver and Pfeiffer agree with Rowley.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 268.

¹⁹ Thomson, p. ix.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. xi.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. viii, ix.

²² Keil, pp. 23, 24.

²³ Zöckler, p. 42.

²⁴ Cited by Zöckler, *ibid.*

²⁵ Otto Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament, an Introduction* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 525.

²⁶ J. J. Owens has recently pointed out: "We do not have the date of this word from Jeremiah" ("Daniel," *Broadman Bible Commentary*, 6:440). Recent scholars, aware that 586 is the actual date of the fall of Jerusalem, refer to that date as the starting point mentioned in Dan 9:25.

²⁷ Montgomery, *International Critical Commentary*, p. 400.

²⁸ See comments on 9:24.

²⁹ "Bevan renders [the Hebrew] *dabar* 'promise,' without so much as a hint that there can be any doubt in the matter." "In ver. 23 we have the same combination . . . (*ya'azze dabar*, 'a command went forth.' The probability is always in favour of holding a word not to change its meaning in contiguous verses, unless there is some indication that a change has taken place" (Thomson, p. 268). "If *dabar* had meant 'promise' or 'prophecy' here, it would have been followed with the words in which the prophecy was announced. If, on the other hand, *dabar* is taken as 'a decree,' the infinitive is natural" (*ibid.*, p. 269).

Since "*dabhar* here, as in v. 23, is without the definite article, . . . we must therefore render it 'a word,' not 'the word.' To render it 'the word' would be to relegate its utterance to past time, thereby leading the reader to suppose that the 'word' intended was the promise made to Jeremiah referred to in v. 2; whereas, as a matter of fact, the time of the divine utterance is left quite undefined" (Bourflower, p. 187). "The opening words of Gabriel, as well as the whole tone of his communication, would lead Daniel to expect a divine 'word,' that would be uttered in the future, rather than to look back to one that had been already uttered in the past" (*ibid.*).

³⁰ When Montgomery uses Jer 25 as the decree, he adds, "It must be admitted that the dating is not exactly 'from the issue of the word,' i.e. the word of Jeremiah 25:2 in year 1 of Nebuchadnezzar. . . . The 62 weeks would then take us down

some 65 years too far. . . . We can meet the objection only by surmising a chronological miscalculation" (pp. 392, 393). Ewald pointed out that a Jewish writer of the age of the Maccabees would be very unlikely to be so ignorant of the history of the time of Cyrus as to commit an error of this kind. Bouffflower, after citing Ewald, goes on to say, "Certainly in the Persian period the Jews were not careless in recording exact dates, as we know from the Books of Haggai, Zechariah, Ezra, and Nehemiah, where mention is made of events which happened in the first and second years of Cyrus, in the second, fourth, and sixth years of Darius I., and in the seventh, twentieth, and thirty-second years of Artaxerxes I., in many cases with the addition of the month and the day" (p. 177).

²¹ Critics suggest that chronological errors in Josephus parallel what we would expect in the author of Daniel, but it should be remembered that in the second century BC "the nation and kingdom . . . [had not] so completely fallen into disruption as at the time subsequent to the second destruction of Jerusalem, when Josephus made in Rome his unsuccessful attempts at restoring a chronology" (Ewald, *Prophets of the Old Testament*, Vol. 5, p. 270).

Ewald distinctly asserts concerning Israel that "its chronology had been accurately kept up" (*ibid.*).

²² Montgomery writes, on page 383, "The word translated 'destroy' . . . is generally taken in the physical sense, so 8:24, 11:17, but there was little destruction effected by the Greeks in the Holy City; it may then be understood in the moral sense 'corrupt.'"

But J. Lambrecht, writing much more recently, says it is certain that the Greek translators of Dan 8 recognized the devastation aspect clearly present in 9:26 and 11:44 (see *Die Redaktion Der Markus-Apokalypse*, p. 150). It should be noted that both verses 26 and 27 speak of the Messiah in the first half, and in the last half they give the result of His rejection. Thus there is a causal link between the "cutting off" of the Messiah and the subsequent destruction of the city.

²³ For example: desolations, city, Jerusalem, transgression, sins, iniquity, covenant, righteousness, sanctuary.

²⁴ The whole drift of the passage fits the Gospel record so precisely that it requires a mental feat of some magnitude to envisage the fulfillment in the times of Antiochus Epiphanes. The opening verse summarizes all the blessings of a completed redemption, then in immediate context is the Procurer of these blessings pointed out. Furthermore the manner of the achievement is also made clear. It is said that the Messiah is to be "cut off" and indicates that this will take place in the once holy city that by divine providence had been reestablished. The passage also gives the same emphasis as does Christ Himself to the sealing of the covenant as the *modus operandi* for conveying the infinite salvation. Verse 27, the first half, finds its parallel in Christ's affirmation at the last supper (Mk 14:24). See the commentary on 9:24-27 for further details.

Thus the application of 9:24-27 is similar to the case made for Antiochus as exhausting 8:10ff. That petty tyrant's brief history is scarcely adequate to meet the grandeur of scope and scene in chapters 8 and 9. In neither of these chapters are the peculiarities

of the Syrian persecution noted. Wright, on page 183, has written as follows on chapter 8:

"Nor is any allusion made in the prophecy to the murder of Onias III, an event the importance of which modern critics have unduly magnified. The cessation of 'the perpetual service' in the Temple is mentioned, and the treading down underfoot both of that sanctuary and of Israel. Similar things, however, and even worse, took place when the Holy Temple and the people of Israel were trodden underfoot by the Babylonians. No allusion is made in this vision of Daniel to the shameful profanation of the altar by the sacrifice of swine, nor to the erection of a heathen altar over that of Jehovah. No allusion also is made to an idol set up above or beside that altar. No reference is made to the scandalous profanation of the sabbath or to the abolition of circumcision. And yet one would naturally and reasonably expect reference to be made to all those events, had the prophecy been written in the Maccabean era. . . . The indefiniteness of the prophecy is strongly in favour of its genuineness."

²⁵ See F. F. Bruce, *Biblical Exegesis in the Qumran Scrolls*; Russell, *The Method and Message of Apocalyptic*.

Carrington writes, "The words 'for many' in Daniel, Isaiah, and the Gospels may suggest something akin to Isaiah's doctrine of the remnant . . . which remains faithful in its covenant relation with God" (*According to Mark*, p. 313). Furthermore, it is exceedingly doubtful that the permission given to the Jews to Hellenize can be called the making of a covenant. See Young on this passage. Again, the time of suspension of sacrifice under Antiochus was not for three and a half years. The period was less than three years.

²⁶ 2 Maccabees 4:33-38. Some have questioned the historicity of the record of the death of Onias. See Thomson on 9:26. Wellhausen declared the account of the assassination to be apocryphal. See also Driver, p. 491, note.

²⁷ See, e.g., Patrick Fairbairn's *Prophecy: Its Distinctive Nature*; also Auberlen.

This fact also illuminates a key objection to the sixth-century dating of Daniel. It is often pointed out that Bible prophets addressed themselves primarily to the crisis of their own times rather than to events centuries off. Inasmuch as the "visions" of Daniel "obviously" portray the work of Antiochus, the book must have been written in his time. However, the events central to both the narratives and the visions of Daniel match the crisis of the sixth century as well as that of the second century BC.

²⁸ Carrington almost certainly believed Daniel to have been written in the second century BC but nevertheless recognizes that Christ applied 9:24-27 to His own day. He writes, "Now Jesus certainly accepted the title of Messiah in xiv. 62, and combined it with the symbolism of the Son of Man . . . who comes with the clouds of heaven and receives the Kingdom from God; but it looks as if he also took into account the death of the Prince-Messiah in Daniel ix. 26, 27, since he made use of those verses in his apocalyptic; it would seem that he saw in them an image of the tragic times through which Israel was to pass during that evil generation; the Messiah cut off, war and rumour of wars, the temple destroyed, and the abomination of desolation standing where it ought not" (p. 183).

James Morison in his commentary on Matthew stresses the fact that the Olivet discourse is based on what he calls "the great fatal prediction of Daniel 9:24-27" (p. 464). H. A. W. Meyer and many other well-known commentators make the same point.

Wright comments on page 240 that both the LXX and I Maccabees reflect an understanding of 9:24-27 as applying to Antiochus Epiphanes. Then he adds, "That interpretation our Lord cast aside, while He spoke of the prophecy having reference to the events preceding the siege of Jerusalem (Matt 24:15)." It should also be noted that both the ancient translators of the LXX and modern liberal critics have been forced to "amend" the Hebrew text at several points in order to force it into the Maccabean mold.

³⁹ *Jesus, the World's Perfecter*, pp. 141, 142.

⁴⁰ James Orr has written on this position as follows: "The resort is a desperate one, for, as the critics admit, there never existed a separate Median kingdom, and the Book of Daniel throughout views the Medo-Persian kingdom as one (chs vi.8, 12, 15; viii.20). To make out the theory, a separate kingdom has to be erected out of the two years' reign of the obscure 'Darius the Mede,' who exercised at best a delegated authority (chap v.31; ix.1). If anyone can seriously believe that this brief reign answers to the description of the fierce, devouring bear of Dan. vii.5—one of the 'four great beasts from the sea' (ver. 3)—argument is at an end. . . . The fourth kingdom of the earlier visions, though it also has a 'little horn' (growing out of ten, chap vii.8, 24), of which Antiochus may be viewed as the Old Testament prefiguration, bears little resemblance to the picture of the Grecian [in chapter 8]—in many respects is entirely diverse from it—while the third kingdom, symbolized by the leopard, with its four wings and four heads (chap vii.6), answers precisely to the latter" (*The Problem of the Old Testament* [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1906], p. 537).

⁴¹ Pusey, p. 143.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 144.

⁴³ For an example see H. H. Rowley, *Darius the Mede and the Four World Empires*.

⁴⁴ For critiques of the critical positions on the four kingdoms see such commentators as Hengstenberg, Pusey, Auberlen, Wright, Bishop Newton, Barnes, Young, Price, and the *SDA Bible Commentary*. A representative statement is the following by Wright:

"Even Porphyry explained the third beast of Alexander, and considered the fourth beast to be the Greek empire under the Diadochi. . . . Porphyry did not, however, dream of the modern invention of Median empire. The Macedonian kingdom was divided into four kingdoms during the larger part of its history. That characteristic of the Greek empire is indicated by the beast having four heads. The symbol cannot mean . . . four kings who succeeded one another. . . . It indicates four permanent divisions in the empire symbolized. When the historical fact that had to be set forth that the Macedonian empire at the beginning was ruled over by one king, and after the death of that king the empire was divided into four parts, the symbol had to be changed and horns were substituted instead of heads, as in the vision of ch. viii. Horns can, with propriety, be described as falling off, broken, or uprooted. No such language, however, can be employed of the heads of an animal" (*Daniel and His Prophecies*, p. 154).

A similarly pertinent argument is made by the same writer: "It is also strange to imagine that ten successive kings of Syria (a kingdom which embraced only one-fourth part of the Greek Empire) could be represented as horns of a beast symbolizing the entire fourfold Macedonian empire. It is further absurd to conceive that three individuals who never sat on the Syrian throne could be represented as 'horns' of that beast, uprooted in order to prepare the way for the accession of Antiochus Epiphanes" (*ibid.*, p. 162).

Principles of Prophetic Interpretation: A Hermeneutic for the Study of Daniel

Too many commentaries on Daniel have been written without a hermeneutical rationale, that is, without a defense of the principles of interpretation guiding the particular exegete. The necessity for consistent principles in interpretation is apparent as soon as we consider the vast variety of opinions on any passage of Scripture. Unbelievers jeer that the Bible has a nose of wax capable of being twisted in any direction. "All kinds of twisting and turning done here" was the familiar sign in the old blacksmith's shop, and it could well be the motto adorning the library wall of some expositors.

Of course at this point the commentator reveals his inevitable prejudices. In every difficult area in a Daniel commentary one can almost predict an exegete's positions if his particular school is known. Whether he be a dispensationalist or not, a preterist or not, a Bultmannian or not, may have much more to do with the results of his investigation than any other factor.

Presuppositions there must be, but the difference between the presuppositions of conservative theology and the presuppositions of the other groups is that those of the former are provided by the Scripture itself whereas those of the other groups are not.¹

The present writer dwells in the camp of

conservative theology mentioned above. Every man is privileged to differ, but having done so, he should justify not only his unbeliefs but his very capacity to exercise judgment. A deterministic world view leaves no grounds for rational decisions—for such a view assumes the inevitability of every event being just what it is, including human "choices."² Other alternatives exist. A man can accept the supernatural and still reject the inspiration of Scripture. Then his task is to present an option with less problems than the one he is rejecting.

This commentary also accepts the self-consistency of Scripture. On this basis, parallel passages are employed for exegesis in order that the Bible might become its own interpreter. The New Testament becomes a chief arbiter of ultimate meaning wherever it can be rightly invoked. Nevertheless, being sympathetic with the position taken by many modern scholars that the first attempt at grasping the meaning of Old Testament passages should be made from what is available in the Old Testament itself, we have usually begun our investigations as though living in that era and belonging to the people first addressed by the prophet.

The major principles of the hermeneutic employed are comprehended by the term "gram-

matico-historical exegesis." In brief, this approach, which has been traditional with and since the Reformation, involves an investigation that includes the following principles in an attempt to interpret.

1. *Lexical.* This involves the specific meaning of each word at the time when it was used and in harmony with the Bible writers' customary usage.

The sense of Scripture is to be found in the grammatical meaning of the words. To respect the grammatical sense is the fundamental rule in the study of all books, and the Bible, though rightly revered as "the Book of books," is nevertheless still a book. It is no magical object left mysteriously lying in man's path and requiring occult methods for extorting its powers. Every word is therefore to be accepted in its normal meaning and in the context of the style of writing in which it appears.³

2. *Syntactic.* To interpret syntactically means to interpret according to the grammatical principles known to exist at the time of writing. The tenses, the use of the article, the dative case, etc., must be taken into account in the study of the LXX or Greek New Testament, and the states of verbs, significance of the inseparable prepositions and pronominal suffixes, construct state, etc., in the Hebrew Old Testament.

3. *Contextual.* The interpreter takes into account what is written prior to and subsequent to the very passage he is studying. He must inquire regarding the trend of thought to be found in the whole document, as this casts light on every part of that document.

4. *Historical.* Inquiry is made as to the circumstances that called forth this particular writing. Also the manners, customs, and psychology of the people among whom the document was produced will be considered.

5. *According to the analogy of Scripture.*⁴ This principle recognizes the divine unity running through the Scriptures. All the passages bearing upon the one subject are gathered and compared in order to find the teaching of the whole Scriptures on that given subject. This particular rule is especially important in the interpretation of Daniel inasmuch as (1) its prophecies consist of a series of

visions which run parallel to each other,⁵ and (2) the entire eschatology of the New Testament interlocks with and casts light upon this Old Testament apocalypse.

In this connection it should be stressed that grammatico-historical exegesis, while giving primary attention to the literal meaning of the words of the passage, does not deny the presence of figurative, poetic, and symbolic elements.⁶ For example, most of the prophets have written in poetry. The apocalyptic writers are usually the exception to this law, using prose rather than poetry for the most part.

Legal and documentary material is necessarily found in the form of plain prose, but common speech is enlivened by metaphor, simile and parable to a degree far greater than is generally realized. The prophetic writings of the Bible are full of such figures of speech; so also are its poetical and apocalyptic portions. The presence of metaphor and symbol must be recognized, but this does not require the abandonment of the principle of obedience to grammatical sense. The words must still be taken in their grammatical sense, though that sense will vary as the style of the writing departs from prose and conforms to one or other of the modes of figurative speech. This recognition of metaphorical style is not to be thought of as a return to allegorization, nor is it a "spiritualizing" of the passage. When a writer employs metaphor he is to be understood metaphorically and his metaphorical meaning is his literal meaning; that is to say, it is the truth he wishes to convey. The term "literal" stands strictly as the opposite of "figurative," but in modern speech it often means "real," and it is used in this way by those who want to be sure that they know what the writer really and originally meant.⁷

Note also the words of Girdlestone:

That which makes the language of prophecy so vivid and yet so difficult is that it is always more or less figurative. It is poetry rather than prose.⁸

Now we wish to add to these basic concepts, which apply to every task of exegesis, some considerations that particularly affect the interpretation of prophecy, for prophetic passages are notoriously more difficult than didactic or historical ones. For this reason the following pages

will lean heavily on a wide variety of prophetic expositors in order to relieve the present writer of any charge of novelty in the principles laid down.

¹ Ernest F. Kevan, "The Principles of Interpretation," *Revelation and the Bible*, ed. Carl F. H. Henry (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1958), p. 293.

² "Determinism, if taken seriously, would involve the further notion that all intellectual judgment is itself determined, but this would have to apply even to the judgment that determinism is true. The point has seldom been made more clearly than in the following sentence from the pen of Paul Tillich. 'The determinist does not see that the very affirmation of determinism as true presupposes the freedom of decision between true and false' " (D. E. Trueblood, *Philosophy of Religion*, pp. 279, 280).

³ Kevan, in *Revelation and the Bible*, pp. 293, 294.

⁴ See Chamberlain's *Exegetical Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, I.

⁵ See Appendix A, "The Parallel Nature of Daniel's Prophecies."

⁶ See Oswald T. Allis, *Prophecy and the Church*, (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1945), p. 17.

⁷ Kevan, in *Revelation and the Bible*, p. 294.

⁸ Quote in Bernard Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation* (Boston: W. A. Wilde Company, 1956), p. 228.

The Special Characteristics of Prophetic Passages

With the background of the general hermeneutical principles laid down in the previous chapter, we now take a look at many of the special characteristics of prophetic passages. The material in the previous chapter is basic to understanding these characteristics.

Historically Conditioned. This point has been mentioned before, but it is twice as important in the present connection because it is too often forgotten that every prophet was primarily a spokesman for God to his own contemporaries as certainly as were the writers of the Epistles. They did not speak into a void, and neither was that which they wrote intended purely for those that would live many generations away. Berkhof says,

It is a mistake, of frequent occurrence in the past, to regard their environment. At present, the pendulum is swinging in the opposite direction, and it becomes necessary to warn against the idea that history will explain everything in the prophets. The ancient seer often found historical occasions transcending the limits of history.¹

Typical and Organic. By this we mean that prophecy often enshrines general ideas that are to be gradually and progressively realized as does a beautiful flower gradually unfold from a bud. Prophecy often builds upon the types of sacred

history and develops in an ever-ascending scale.²

There are in the Old Testament numerous situations which disclose the fundamental relationship between God and his world, and when the problems of that relationship recur in later history, it is natural and inevitable that they should be expounded in the language and thought-forms previously employed in a similar connection. As the God of the Hebrews and the God of Christians is one and the same (Heb. 1:1ff.), the "types" of the Old Testament, developed and reinterpreted in Christian thought, provide a method of interpretation which is properly and fundamentally theological.³

It would not be true of any literature which deserves to be called great, that its meaning is restricted to that which was explicitly in the mind of the author when he wrote. On the contrary, it is a part of what constitutes the quality of greatness in literature that it perpetuates itself by unfolding ever new richness of unsuspected meaning as time goes on. The ultimate significance of prophecy is not only what it meant for its author, but what it came to mean for those who stood within the tradition which he founded or promoted, and who lived under the impact of the truth he declared.

It is a thoroughly unhistorical proceeding to attempt to read the biblical documents as if they were (let us say) newly discovered Ugaritic texts, coming to us out of a forgotten age, across an unbridged chasm of time. They have had a continuous life

within the community to which they belong, and belonged from the first, in its changing forms, Israelite, Jewish and Christian. The Old Testament Scriptures formed part of the daily environment of the writers of the New Testament, as the writings of both testaments form part of our own daily environment in the Christian Church. The meaning of the writings cannot remain static while the life to which they belong changes with the centuries.⁴

Abraham's history of going down into Egypt, experiencing oppression, being delivered as God plagued the Egyptians, was repeated in his descendants centuries later. Similarly, Israel's return from Babylon in the sixth century BC is used in the New Testament to describe a final separation of God's people from worldly organizations (see Rev 18:1-4). The seven last plagues described in Rev 15, 16 are modeled on the plagues that fell upon Egypt as recorded in Exodus. One of those plagues concerns Armageddon and is obviously based on the great battle between Israel and her enemies at Megiddo as recorded in passages such as Jgs 5 and alluded to in prophetic passages such as Zec 12:9-14 and Rev 16:17.

Another example is to be found in Melchizedek, priest-king (see Gen 14:18; cf. Ps 110 with Rev 1:5; 20:4, 5; Zec 6:9-13). In the first reference we find the example of one man who was both priest and king. In the next we find a prophecy that the Messiah would be a priest-king. Zec 6 says similarly. The references in Revelation declare that all the Messiah's followers are priest-kings. This is an excellent example of the typical and organic factor in prophecy.

That rare volume *Creation Centred in Christ* by H. G. Guinness has much to say in this area.⁵ Other writers too have commented upon this principle.⁶ It should be noted that writers such as France are not talking about allegory but something that is actually grounded in history.⁷

The Possibility of Dual or Multiple Fulfillment. This should not be thought of as implying a double sense or prophecy but rather the same sense in recurring situations. This is sometimes called "the apotelesmatic principle."⁸ Ramm speaks of the "possibility of multiple fulfillment."⁹ And Berkhof writes:

The fulfillment of some of the most important prophecies is germinant, i.e., they are fulfilled by instalments, each fulfilment being a pledge of that which is to follow. Hence while it is a mistake to speak of a double or treble sense of prophecy, it is perfectly correct to speak of a two or threefold fulfilment. It is quite evident, e.g., that Joel's prophecy in 2:28-32 was not completely fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. Notice also the predictions respecting the coming of the Son of Man in Matt. 24.¹⁰

Peter Beyerhaus has written:

The prophetic texts constitute a peculiar literary species. They very seldom convey an unequivocal message that can be collected from their plain wording. Rather we have to distinguish carefully between the historic application at the time of the author, the employment of metaphorical imagery, sometimes taken from the contemporary world of religions, and the really prophetic prediction that sometimes even finds its fulfillment in different events at different stages of salvation history.

Thus prophetic texts often consist of different transparent levels, which in our natural perspective have merged into one single and therefore highly enigmatic level. This gives them to the rationalistic mind an obscured appearance; the features of the multi-level visions mingle and cannot easily be distinguished.¹¹

George Eldon Ladd has spoken of the manner in which the "kingdom" passages of the Bible belong to the pattern of promise, fulfillment, and consummation. In other words, he is saying that the first advent of Jesus witnessed the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies, but the second advent witnesses their consummation.¹²

This is no new idea. Centuries ago Lord Bacon wrote in his *Advancement of Learning*, Book II, page 60:

But here we must allow that latitude which is peculiar and familiar to divine prophecies, which have their completion not only at stated times, but in succession, as participating of the nature of their author, "with whom a thousand years are but as one day," and therefore are not fulfilled punctually at once, but have a growing accomplishment through many ages, though the height or fulness of them may refer to a single age or moment.¹³

One of the best statements of this principle is found in a recent Bible commentary, which we have quoted in Appendix D.

Sometimes Conditional. The principles governing the writing and the interpretation of prophecy grow out of the nature of God and the nature of man. Because God in His freedom willed to make man free, all His subsequent dealings with the human race, including those with His church, take this fact into account. Prophecy is not to be equated with determinism. It does not set forth a blind Fate or an implacable, impersonal Destiny as the Arbiter of all things. Jeremiah, in the last half of chapter 17 and the first half of chapter 18, plainly declares that God's promises and threatenings are conditional. If man repents in time, then God's judgments are averted. If man is unfaithful to the principles of the divine covenant, then that covenant lapses. All of God's mercies spring from His grace, but their continual flow depends upon the response of gratitude by sinners. The Almighty will not force us either to receive His grace or to become gracious. Man's part is infinitesimal compared to God's, but it is nonetheless indispensable. *Without Him, we cannot; without us, He will not.* These facts should guide the interpreter of prophecy, whether they are expressed in the context or not.

This clue to interpreting some enigmatic prophecies has been too often overlooked despite repeated warnings from experts in prophetic exegesis. Berkhof puts the case simply:

Prophecies are often conditional, i.e., their fulfilment is in many cases dependent on the contingent actions of men. Some scholars ascribed a conditional character to all predictions, and found in this a ready explanation for the non-fulfilment of a large number. But this is an erroneous view. This conditional character can only be ascribed to those prophecies that referred to the near future, and that could, therefore, be made conditional on the free actions of the prophet's contemporaries. It follows from the nature of the case that prophecies referring to the distant future are not so conditioned. It should be borne in mind that a prophecy may be conditional, though the condition is not expressed. Cf. Jer. 26:17-19; I Kings 21:17-29; Jonah 3:4, 10.¹⁴

Ramm avers similarly and cites Girdlestone:

The interpreter must determine whether the passage is *conditional* or *unconditional*. The Scriptures may or may not state if the passage is conditional. The great promises of a Saviour and his salvation are certainly unconditional. On the other hand it is not difficult to suggest some conditional prophecies (Jer. 18:8, 10 and 26:12-13 and 3:12. Jonah 3:4. Ezekiel 33:13-15 and 18:30-32). Another class of passages is that which sets forth two possible destinies of which only one can be realized, such as the curses and blessings of Deut. 28.

The statement of Girdlestone is a remarkably strong one: "It is probable that hundreds of prophecies, which look absolute as we read them, were not fulfilled in their completeness because the words of warning from the prophet produced some result, even though slight and temporary, on the hearts of the hearers. God does not quench the smoking flax."¹⁵

May be completely intelligible only at the time of fulfillment. In Jn 13:19 and 14:29 Christ assures His disciples that complete understanding and assurance concerning certain of His apparently mystical statements will dawn only when such sayings are fulfilled. This should be a caveat for all interpreters of prophecies yet unfulfilled. Prophecy presents a skeleton of the future, not a flesh-clothed, animated body. The plan of God becomes fully transparent only with the unrolling of the scroll. I have a volume entitled *Louis Napoleon, Destined Monarch of the World* by M. Baxter, a minister, and published in its ninth edition in 1866. The title page foretells the War of Armageddon as due "about or soon after 1873." This exegetical fiasco has had many forerunners and successors from among those who have refused to recognize the principle we have just discussed.

Prophecy, in the words of Sir Isaac Newton, is not given to make men prophets, but as a witness to God when it is fulfilled. Prophecy is a wonderful combination of the clear and the obscure. Enough of God's purpose is revealed to act powerfully upon the heart and conscience of those to whom the heavenly message is sent, but not enough to make fatalists of them, to paralyze human effort, or to coerce the human will: enough to prove the message to have

been a true word from Him to whom alone the unknown future is fully known, but not enough to enable man to foresee with certainty when and how that purpose is to be realized.¹⁶

Sir Isaac Newton wrote long ago:

The folly of Interpreters has been, to foretel times and things by this Prophecy [the Revelation], as if God designed to make them Prophets. By this rashness they have not only exposed themselves, but brought the Prophecy also into contempt. The design of God was much otherwise. He gave this and the Prophecies of the Old Testament, not to gratify men's curiosities by enabling them to foreknow things, but that after they were fulfilled they might be interpreted by the event, and his own Providence, not the Interpreters, be then manifested thereby to the world. For the event [outcome] of things predicted many ages before, will then be a convincing argument that the world is governed by providence.¹⁷

Use of dispensational forms. How should an Old Testament writer describe New Testament times? Is he to use terms and expressions as yet unknown to his first circle of readers? Should God miraculously bestow upon him a new vocabulary to describe situations never known heretofore? How can the prophet encourage "Israel after the flesh" and yet have a message for spiritual Israel which is to replace the covenant nation if the latter proves unfaithful?

There can be only one satisfactory answer to such questions. The prophet must use his own vocabulary, describing things to come in terms of their previous counterparts. This would render understanding possible for his contemporaries and make provision for a more literal fulfillment if literal Israel changes her previous course and proves faithful to God. Thus geographical and cultic expressions familiar to the Israel of the Old Testament become the vehicle for truths about New Testament times. The exegete dealing with such prophecies must shed them of their dispensational forms—those things which in name reflect the age of the Old Testament, though now intended for the later dispensation following the cross. The change from literal Israel to the spiritual Israel of the church, foretold by Christ in Mt 21:43, must be recognized as having now taken

place. An excellent example is found in Acts 15:13-18, where James takes an Old Testament prophecy regarding literal Israel's supremacy over Edom and applies it to the influx of the Gentiles into the Christian church.¹⁸

Kevan has summed this up admirably:

Prophecy had to be spoken within the framework of the present and the past; that is to say, in the terms of the old dispensation. This determines its outward material forms. In all their statements about the kingdom of God, even when uttering the most spiritual and glorious truths regarding it, the vocabulary which the prophets employ is always that of the kingdom of God in the forms in which they knew it in their own day. Interpretation must first discover these "dispensational forms," namely, the historical and circumstantial factors of the prophecy, and then, and only then, can it make the necessary inferences. Putting this succinctly, the rule is that a passage must be examined for its dispensational place. . . .

With regard to a prophecy uttered with reference to Old Testament conditions and peoples, but as yet unfulfilled, Davidson wisely says: "The true way to regard prophecy is to accept it literally as the meaning of the prophet—the only meaning which in his time he could have—but to say, as to fulfillment, that the form of the kingdom of God is now altered, and altered finally, never to return to its old form; and so fulfillment will not take place in the form of the prediction, but in an altered form; but still the truth of the prophecy will, no doubt, be realized" (A. B. Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy*, p. 169). In this way the fulfillment of what the prophet spoke may greatly transcend what he knew.

The valuable and important principle to be learned from this is that a prophecy undergoes transmutation when it passes from one dispensation to another. The understanding of this "transmutation" must be guided by New Testament principles. The light of later and clear revelation is to be brought to bear on the earlier or the more obscure, and Old Testament descriptions of the Day of the Lord and its issues are subject to modification by fuller revelations given to subsequent generations. "Such modifications," says Dr. Beasley-Murray, "are not cancellations of the prophetic word but amplifications, glimpses of broader streams of grace than the narrower rivulets of former days" (G. R. Beasley-Murray, *The Evangelical Quarterly*, July 1948).

Obedience to this rule will yield the following working method.

(1) If the prophet's words apply only to the Old Testament dispensation, and are to be fulfilled in it, they will, no doubt, be fulfilled literally in terms of the Old Testament dispensation.

(2) If the prophecies refer to things to be realized only in the New Testament dispensation, then it will be the interpreter's duty to strip from them the Old Testament form, which arose from the dispensation and time when the prophet lived, and look for their fulfillment in a way corresponding to the spirit of the New Testament dispensation and the altered conditions of the world.

(3) If a great general principle be expressed, capable of several fulfillments, that fulfillment which took place in Old Testament times will be sought in terms of Old Testament economy, and that which either has taken place or will take place in New Testament times will be understood in accordance with the spirit and principles of Christianity (cf. Davidson, *op. cit.*, p. 192).

All this means that it is the interpreter's task to distinguish between what is of permanent validity and what belongs to a stipulated period. "It is fatal," says J. Stafford Wright, "to assume that every Scripture is of permanent validity irrespective of the circumstances in which it was given." The Levitical prescriptions are an example of this.

Prophecy is governed by the law of organic fulfillment. Fulfillment is real: that is to say, what the prophets forecast will come to pass. There is a genuine correspondence between prophecy and the fulfillment, though it will not necessarily be "literalistic" in the sense of a letter-by-letter mechanical correspondence of form in both prediction and fulfillment. The fulfillment of the acorn is the oak, and the fulfillment of the apple blossom is the apple. Thus, so long as the *reality* of the fulfillment is not abandoned, it might be safe to affirm that the best word for the true interpretative rule is "idealistic"; that is to say, it is the embodied "idea" which lives on in the fulfillment, after the "form" has been shed like a husk. The "idea" is latent in the "form," and it is the "idea" which is imperishable. The formula yielded by these considerations can be stated thus: when an Old Testament prophecy passes into the New Testament its *form* is transcended, and its *substance* is transmuted.¹⁸

T. D. Bernard, of an earlier generation, wrote similarly:

The other principle which is contended for and secured is, that *the Gospel is the heir of the Law* [italics his]; that it inherits what the Law had prepared. The Law, on its national and ceremonial side, had created a vast and closely-woven system of ideas. These were wrought out and exhibited by it in forms according to the flesh—an elect nation, a miraculous history, a special covenant, a worldly sanctuary, a perpetual service, an anointed priesthood, a ceremonial sanctity, a scheme of sacrifice and atonement, a purchased possession, a holy city, a throne of David, a destiny of dominion. Were these ideas to be lost, and the language which expressed them to be dropped, when the Gospel came? No! It was the heir of the Law. The Law had prepared these riches, and now bequeathed them to a successor able to unlock and to diffuse them. *The Gospel* claimed them all, and developed in them a value unknown before. It asserted itself as the proper and predestined continuation of the covenant made of God with the fathers, the real and only fulfillment of all which was typified and prophesied; presenting the same ideas, which had been before embodied in the narrow but distinct limits of carnal forms, in their spiritual, universal, and eternal character.

The *complete exposition* [italics his] of the Gospel was the result of a combination of the facts and the words of the old dispensation with the facts and the words of the new, a combination effected in the minds of the Apostles under the teaching of the Holy Ghost, who thus brought to light the meaning and the scope of his own earlier inspirations, preserved in the Law and the Prophets.¹⁹

When dispensationalists wish to apply Old Testament prophecies to literal Israel today, in connection with a restored sanctuary and renewed sacrifices, they forget this principle that the New Testament freely illustrates.

*Christ-centered and church-centered.*²¹ A quotation from Dr. Angus links the preceding characteristics of prophecy with the present one:

The whole of the previous economy is affirmed in the New Testament to be typical. . . .

As the future was thus represented in visions, and under a typical dispensation, it can excite no surprise that the whole is often described in figurative, and allegorical or symbolical terms. . . . Besides, as everything earthly supplies images for describing things spiritual, so does the whole of the Jewish economy. Language borrowed from nature and the

law is therefore as appropriate as it is necessary. The unity and vastness of God's plans are illustrated by it all.

"Under the gospel, for example, Messiah is to be a king, and hence the prophets represent Him as possessed of all the characteristics of the most distinguished princes of the Jewish theocracy, and more than once apply to Him the title of David. . . . Hos. 3. 5; Jer. 30. 9; Acts 13. 34. . . . In the same way, they speak of His kingdom, *either of grace or glory*, as the highest perfection of the Jewish economy. *It is called Jerusalem, or Zion*. Isa. 62. 1, 6, 7; 60. 14-20; Gal. 4. 26-28; Heb. 12. 22. See also Isa. 60. 6, 7; 66. 23" [see Bickersteth]. . . .

"In the same way, the enemies of the kingdom of the Messiah are not only called by the name given to the enemies of the ancient theocracy, viz., the nations of the Gentiles, but they often bear the name of some one people, who, at the time, were peculiarly inimical or powerful. In Isa. 25, they are called by the name of Moab; in Isa. 63 and Amos 9:12, by the name of Edom; and in Ezek. 38, by the name of Magog." . . .

Nor need this peculiarity of prophetic language excite surprise. It is found pervading the whole ancient dispensation. . . .

All of these expressions, however, are in the *New Testament applied to the church*. . . . Nearly all the characteristic names of Israel are applied to the body of believers. In the first case, the blessings and relations, so far as the people were concerned, are earthly and temporal; in the second, spiritual and eternal. The apostles reason throughout their writings on the same principle. We who believe, and are united to Christ, are children of Abraham and heirs of his promise (Gal. 3. 29; Rom. 4. 11, 16); the Israel of God (Gal. 6. 16), as distinguished from the Israel according to the flesh (1 Cor. [11]. 18); the true circumcision (Phil. 3. 3), who therefore appropriate ancient promises (Gen. 22. 16, 17, applied to all believers; Heb. 6. 13, 20; Deut. 31. 6; Josh. 1. 5, quoted Heb. 13. 4, 5; Hos. 1. 10; 2. 23, quoted Rom. 9. 24-26).

After the exodus comes the institution of the ritual law, its sacrifices, priesthood, mercy seat, tabernacle and temple, and worship. *All these*, it need hardly be remarked, are represented in the prophets as being restored in the latter days, and in the Gospels each expression is applied to our Lord or to his church. He is priest, and propitiatory, . . . tabernacle (. . . John 1. 14), and temple (. . . John 2. 19); as also, since his ascension, is his church (1 Cor. 3. 16). Her members offer spiritual offerings. They form a royal

priesthood, a holy nation. . . .

Haggai and Zechariah foretell the rebuilding of a temple, and under that figure speak of the church. . . . In a word, not only the prophets, but all the inspired writers describe the church in terms borrowed from successive stages in the history of the ancient economy.²²

These characteristics of being Christ- and church-centered are, of course, present in all of the Scriptures, but they are often overlooked in prophetic passages. Jesus recognized this fact:

And he said to them, "See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself." . . . Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures (Lk 24:38-45).

You search the scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness to me; yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life (Jn 5:39, 40).²³

Because literal Israel rejected Christ and God's plan for them, it is essential that we read Old Testament prophecies in the light of the transition of God's promises and plans for spiritual Israel—the worldwide church. Christ plainly told the representatives of literal Israel, "The kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation producing the fruits of it" (Mt 21:43). The New Testament also tells us who that "nation" is. Writing to Gentiles converted to Christ, Peter says, "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people" (1 Pe 2:9). On the Tuesday of Passion Week Christ left the temple with the exclamation, "Behold, your house is forsaken and desolate" (Mt 23:38). The temple on earth in which He now dwells is the Christian church (see Eph 2:19-22; 1 Cor 3:10-16).

Repeatedly the New Testament tells us that Israel now consists of all believers in Christ (see Rom 2:28, 29; Gal 3:28, 29; 6:15, 16; Php 3:3). Circumcision is now of the Spirit and sacrifices are those of praise (Col 2:11; 1 Pe 2:5; Heb 13:15). The book which closes the canon of Scriptures speaks throughout of the church in terms of the ancient chosen nation. Furthermore, when Old Testament prophecies about literal Israel are applied in the New Testament, they are seen as fulfilled in the church (see Acts 15:14-19; Heb

8:6-13). Literal Jews can now be saved only by being grafted into the *Christian church* which, because it is Christ's, is accounted as holy, "a good olive tree," true Israel (see Rom 11:16; cf. Heb 8:8 and Eph 2:12 which picture the church of the new covenant as Israel). The modern fad of interpreting literally the Old Testament prophecies about Israel and viewing the new Jewish state in Palestine as a fulfillment of prophecy has no support whatever from the New Testament.

Other nations than Israel are mentioned in prophecy only as they affect Israel, that is, only as they affect God's people. Prophecy was not given in order that we might be able to foretell the destiny of nations that are not directly related to the church of God.

Prophecy has a purpose that is primarily moral and soteriological rather than sheerly intellectual. One of the tests of a true interpretation of prophecy is its alignment with this principle. Jesus declared of the Old Testament prophecies that they bore witness of Him in order that readers might be led to Him and thus find life (Jn 5:39, 40). What John said concerning his record of Christ's ministry is true of all the Scriptures: "These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name" (Jn 20:31).

Mere crystal-ball enlightenment regarding the future would more likely inflate us than make us Christlike. God has so guided in the writing of the prophetic word that humanity is never exalted and that He alone might stand out as the Only One who is all-wise and all-good. The universal theme is that of the redemptive acts of God centering around the first and second advents of Christ.

Inspired seers tell the same story as the apostles—that lost, guilt-laden, grief-oppressed, passion-driven men and women have a heavenly Father who is mighty to save. Salvation has three aspects: it is related to the past and is designed to remove the *guilt* of sin; it is related to the present and can take away the *power* of sin; it will be climaxed in the future, removing even the *presence* of sin. The first is known as justification; the second, sanctification; and the third, glorification. Looking back to Calvary brings the faith that justifies; looking forward to the Coming brings the

hope which sanctifies; looking upward to Heaven's throne brings the love that satisfies.

Thus, all of prophecy revolves around salvation and teaches us to consider God at work—in the past, present, and future—doing all things well on behalf of His people. The prophet inspired of God pointed to the cutting off of Messiah the Prince (Dan 9:26); to the establishment of His everlasting kingdom (2:44, 45; 7:13, 14, 27; 12:1-3); and to His present rule as "the King of heaven," who "removes kings and sets up kings" (4:37; 2:21). Thus, as one studies such prophecies as Dan 8 and 9 he finds not only Medo-Persia, Greece, Alexander and his successors, but also "the Prince of princes" (8:25); also called "Messiah the Prince" (9:25, KJV) and "Michael the great captain, who stands guard over [His people]" (12:1, NEB). He is the Stone of Dan 2, the "Son of man" of Dan 7 (KJV), and all the visions speak of His unique work on behalf of men. His incarnation, sinless life, divinely attested anointing, atoning death, resurrection, ascension, priestly ministry, climactic work as Judge and King—all are embraced in the revelations entrusted to "the prophet Daniel" for us.

Therefore, let us not look in prophecy for anything that is unrelated to God's mighty acts of salvation. Let us shun the fads of eccentric interpreters who wish to find today's military tyrants as central in the Word, who confuse military fracas in Palestine with the "battle on the great day" of His eschatological salvation, or the political strategies of literal Israel now numbered with the Gentiles as though these fulfilled the promises to the Israel of God.

Prophecy pictures God as the Deliverer whose eye is ever upon those who seek to please Him in all things. Thus with every revelation of coming warfare against the church are also given promises of divine cognizance and help. Even when evil powers are sketched, the drawing is done in such a way as to teach also of Christ and His people whom the devil counterfeits.²⁴

In the prophecies of Daniel we find reason for the New Testament admonition that "whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that by steadfastness and by the

encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope" (Rom 15:4). We are clearly shown that nations do not rise or fall by chance but that God is sovereign over the affairs of empires and individuals. It is clearly indicated also that prosperity in the long term depends upon righteousness. "Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small." While with patience He bears with arrogance and iniquity, there comes a moment when the message of judgment appears on the wall, and feasting gives way to falling.

Even the details of prophecy frequently have moral bearing. Christ applied the stone of chapter 2 to Himself, saying that "every one who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces; but when it falls on any one it will crush him" (Lk 20:18). Men must either have their self-will broken now by submission to Christ, the Rock of Ages, or be pulverized at His coming when all that is contrary to His character will be erased.

The deliverances pictured in Dan 3 and 6 are applied to the last great deliverance of God's saints in the final time of trouble (cf. 3:28; 6:14, 16, 20-27 with 12:1).

The sanctuary so prominent in the prophecies of Daniel is used in Scripture as a symbol of the church and of each believer, as well as of the heaven of heavens where Christ ministers (see Eph 2:21, 22; 1 Cor 6:19; Heb 8, 9). One writer has well portrayed the spiritual significance of this symbolism:

In the cleansing of the temple, Jesus was announcing His mission as the Messiah, and entering upon His work. That temple, erected for the abode of the divine Presence, was designed to be an object lesson for Israel and for the world. From eternal ages it was God's purpose that every created being, from the bright and holy seraph to man, should be a temple for the indwelling of the Creator. Because of sin, humanity ceased to be a temple for God. Darkened and defiled by evil, the heart of man no longer revealed the glory of the Divine One.

But by the incarnation of the Son of God, the purpose of Heaven is fulfilled. God dwells in humanity, and through saving grace the heart of man becomes again His temple. God designed that the temple at Jerusalem should be a continual witness to the high destiny open to every soul. . . . In cleansing

the temple from the world's buyers and sellers, Jesus announced His mission to cleanse the heart from the defilement of sin—from the earthly desires, the selfish lusts, the evil habits, that corrupt the soul.²⁵

God's concern for His sanctuary as shown in the prophecies reveals His love for His church.

The deliverance of captive Israel from Babylon by God's messiah (Is 45:1), who came from the sunrising, is used again in the New Testament in connection with the deliverance of God's people from latter-day Babylon (Rev 16:12-14). This is in harmony with Christ, the Messiah, being represented in both Testaments as the One from heaven. He is thus called "the dayspring [the sunrising]" (Lk 1:78, margin [KJV]; Mal 4:2; Jn 9:5; 2 Pe 1:19; Rev 2:28).

Jerusalem in Hebrew meant "city of peace," whereas Babylon came to mean "confusion" (Gen 11:9). Babel originally meant "gate of god," but disobedience gave a new meaning to the name. As one reviews the prophecies which revolve around the realities symbolized by the two cities, it becomes apparent that blessing is for those who cherish the peace of God by warring against sin and that judgment falls on all others whose lives become a confusion as a result of refusing allegiance to the only True Center of existence.

Israel in Christ's day read the prophecies without spiritual insight. Acts 13:27 says, "For those who live in Jerusalem and their rulers, because they did not recognize him nor understand the utterances of the prophets which are read every sabbath, fulfilled these by condemning him." Because they did not discern the spiritual glory of Christ, they failed to read the prophecies aright. It is not strange then that large numbers who now claim to be awaiting the King of kings and His kingdom may misinterpret prophecy by failing to discern the spiritual glory of Christ and His teachings of truth.

This principle throws a solemn responsibility upon all who attempt to interpret the Bible prophecies. Only the Spirit who indited it can explain it. Therefore it is written:

But the unspiritual man simply cannot accept the

matters which the Spirit deals with—they just don't make sense to him, for, after all, you must be spiritual to see spiritual things (1 Cor 2:14, Phillips).

And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven" (Mt 16:17).

The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant (Ps 25:14, KJV).

Many of the Reformers, especially Calvin, spoke of the *Testimonium*, by which they meant the witness of the Holy Spirit to the believing heart. They saw that human reason was insufficient to authenticate or explain the Scriptures. Only the Spirit can do either. Thus they echoed the teaching of Paul, who wrote that the gospel comes in word and Spirit (1 Th 1:5). The Word is the Spirit's sword, and therefore is efficacious only as the Spirit wields it. According to 2 Cor 3 the study of Scripture is a ministration of death unless accompanied by the Holy Spirit, who alone can take away the veil from our comprehension. Christ spoke the same truth when He declared that "it is the spirit that gives life, the flesh is of no avail" (Jn 6:63).

Two temptations await every Christian. One is to seek the guidance of the Spirit without the Scriptures. This leads to fanaticism. The other no less real peril is to use the Scriptures without constant dependence upon the Spirit. This leads to a cold rational faith that cannot resurrect the soul dead in trespasses and sins. The phenomenon presented by scores of cults, each claiming that its interpretations come from the Bible and the Bible only, illustrates the peril against which we warn. Indeed, their interpretations *have* come from the Bible *only* in the sense that the Spirit has not been a welcome teacher in their midst, and consequently

the use of Scripture has become abused. True Protestantism affirms as its principle of authority the Holy Spirit speaking through the Scriptures. Thus there is an external principle (the Bible) and an internal principle (the witness of the Spirit) which alone can counteract the noetic effects of sin and illuminate the mind.²⁶

We live in an age where Judas theologians abound, men who sell their expositions of the Written Word of God while betraying it. To all of us comes Christ's challenge that only "the pure in heart . . . shall see God," and in seeing Him see the truth as well. One has beautifully written:

Only like can appreciate like. Unless you accept in your own life the principle of self-sacrificing love, which is the principle of His character, you cannot know God. The heart that is deceived by Satan, looks upon God as a tyrannical, relentless being; the selfish characteristics of humanity, even of Satan himself, are attributed to the loving Creator. "Thou thoughtest," He says, "that I was altogether such an one as thyself." Psalm 50:21. His providences are interpreted as the expression of an arbitrary, vindictive nature. So with the Bible, the treasure house of the riches of His grace. The glory of its truths, that are as high as heaven and compass eternity, is undiscerned.²⁷

Daniel himself is the classic example of an ideal student of prophecy (see 9:1; 8:27; 10). This man, thrice called "greatly beloved," was disciplined physically, mentally, and spiritually, and he was dedicated. His life appeared faultless even to his enemies. Love for God and man was his primary motive; and humility, meekness, courtesy, and reverence characterized him. No wonder angels entrusted to him the secrets noted in heaven's "book of truth" (10:21). The same spirit now will result in a similar trust.

Excursus—The New Testament Use of the Old Testament

Any discussion regarding hermeneutics should include something about the New Testament use of the Old Testament. It is too often taken for granted that the prevailing usage is either

rabbinical or literary rather than exegetical. C. H. Dodd cannot be accused of fundamentalist leanings, and his conclusions on the topic are worthy of respect. He writes:

In general . . . the writers of the New Testament, in making use of passages from the Old Testament, remain true to the main intention of their writers.

We have before us a considerable intellectual feat. The various scriptures are acutely interpreted along lines already discernible within the Old Testament canon itself or in pre-Christian Judaism—in many cases, I believe, lines which start from their first, historical intention—and these lines are carried forward to fresh results.²⁸

Despite these comments from Dodd, it remains true that often passages from the Old Testament seem to be applied in a way that is quite at variance with the original setting and primary historical meaning. Mt 1:22, 23; 2:15, 17, 18; Rom 8:36; Eph 4:8; Heb 1:5; 2 Cor 6:18 are instances wherein passages which originally applied to literal Israel or their kings are applied in the New Testament to Christ or the church.

E. E. Ellis has suggested why such usage as above remains legitimate. His rationale relies upon:

(1) a typological correspondence between Old Testament *Heilsgeschichte* and the "new age" fulfilment in Jesus Christ; (2) the Semitic idea of corporate solidarity in which the king of Israel and Israel, Christ (Israel's true king) and the "body of Christ," stand in realistic relationship to one another; and (3) the conviction that the Church is the true Israel and, therefore, the heir to the promises and the object of the prophecies.²⁹

F. F. Bruce alludes to the basis of the typological interpretation found in the New Testament and practiced by the church:

[It] discerns in the biblical recital of God's acts of mercy and judgment a recurring rhythm, by virtue of which earlier stages in the recital can be viewed as foreshadowings and illustrations of later stages (cf. Paul's use of the wilderness experiences of Israel in 1 Cor. x. 1ff.).³⁰

Roger Nicole affirms similarly:

There is obviously a deep underlying relationship between the Old Testament and the New: one purpose pervades the whole Bible and also the various phases

of human history, more especially of Israel. Thus the Old Testament can and must be considered, even in its historical narratives, as a source of prefigurations and of prophecies.³¹

Despite the truth of these statements, it needs also to be said that the New Testament does at times quote the Old in a way that is not intended to be exegetical. Familiar literary references are always part of the coinage of human speech, and we should no more expect Bible writers to be inevitably technical in their employment of Old Testament phrases than we ourselves are in our day-to-day adaptation of well-known phrases. Gal 3:16 and 1 Cor 9:9, 10 are instances of rabbinical argument, but even these usages of the Old Testament cannot be said to be excluded from the original intention of the Old Testament passages quoted, though they are obviously not the primary meaning of such passages. Such instances are surprisingly rare.

More common is the mingling of quotation and commentary in what is known as a midrash pesher. Mt 24, for example, is a midrash pesher of Dan 9:24-27. These are usually legitimate exegetical expansions of Old Testament materials. This commentary alludes to several such instances of midrash pesher where the New Testament employs and expands the first great apocalypse. Because these are found in passages acknowledged as eschatological and they deal with sizable strands of material and not merely occasional phrases, their exegetical intent is apparent.

²⁸ L. Berkhof, *Principles of Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1950), pp. 149, 150.

²⁹ "The first great promise made in Eden, contains the whole of the revelation and prophecy of God, in an embryo state: first, the enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, which has produced all the persecutions endured by the church from the world, since the time of righteous Abel, until this hour, and which she shall endure till the resurrection.

"The second part of it, 'Thou shalt bruise his heel,' has been likewise developing itself during the whole of the same long period. . . . In order to show how true the principle is, let us trace it out a little. We have the promise to Abraham still made of a seed, and now all nations are to inherit the blessing, in whose right their father Abraham is infeoffed in a country by the divine word.

"In the mouth of David, the promise is still of a seed to come, which has now attained the high stature of a triumphant and

universal king of Judah by pre-eminence, of all the earth by equal privilege; in this same character of a king, the child is made known to the immediate precursors of His birth, Zacharias, Elisabeth, Mary, John; in the same character to Simeon, though now His sufferings and the calling of the Gentiles be hinted as first to happen, which He labours all His life long to make intelligible to Nicodemus, to His apostles, and all His disciples.

"In no other character does Peter declare Him, after the day of Pentecost, and James in the council of Jerusalem, and the two shining ones on Mount Olivet, and Paul and all the apostles, than as the King, who ascended on high without seeing corruption, waiting and expecting, till the Father shall accomplish the times and the seasons, and bring in the days of refreshing spoken of by all the prophets, the restitution of all other things waited for by the whole creation of God.

"In no other way does John see Him in the Apocalypse, than as a child, the seed of a woman, caught up to God, and His throne, and there abiding until, after certain sore warfares and persecutions of His church, He comes again with many crowns upon His head, and followed by all the armies of heaven, in order to break the confederacy of Satan's powers, to bind the old serpent himself, and cast him into the bottomless pit, with all the nations that forget God. . . .

"Like the stately branching oak, which begins in an acorn, and of which the end and purpose is, to generate an acorn, while, during the progress of its stately growth, it covers every beast of the earth with its kindly shade, and nestles every bird of heaven in its ample branches; so this promise was sown in the soil of a perfect and perfectly blessed state, while man still dwelt in paradise, and its end is to produce perfectly blessed men, dwelling in paradise again; while, during all the ages of its growth, it should bless the immortal spirits of men with salvation, and its leaves be for the healing of the nations" (Patrick Fairbairn, *Prophecy: Its Distinctive Nature, Its Special Function, and Proper Interpretation* [Edinburgh: T. and T. Clarke, 1865], pp. 183-185).

³ Heaton, pp. 96, 97.

⁴ C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), pp. 131, 132.

⁵ For quotations from his book on this subject, see Appendix B.

⁶ "There is deep harmony and unity between the Old and the New Testaments; though written in different tongues they speak a common theological language. They speak the same truths, but what was in outline in the one is fully-painted in the other; what was shadow in the former is substance in the latter; what was typified in the Old is realized in the New. The unifying principle of interpretation is the homological; that is to say, the clearly discernible prearrangement of things in the one dispensation 'corresponds' to things in the other. It is on the principle of homology that the entire Bible may be said to be a Christian book.

"The homological principle which binds the meaning of the two dispensations points the way to the theological significance which lies within. This theological significance is sometimes called the 'mystical' sense, but it is not for one moment to be

thought of as a 'second' sense not based on the literal meaning of the words" (Kevan, in *Revelation and the Bible*, p. 295).

"Some of the most important prophecies are first couched in general terms, but in the course of God's progressive revelation increase in definiteness and particularity, as we note in those of a Messianic character. They remind one of the bud that gradually opens into a beautiful flower" (Berkhof, *Principles of Biblical Interpretation*, p. 149).

See also R. T. France, *Jesus and the Old Testament* (InterVarsity Press, 1971), pp. 38, 39, and particularly C. K. Barren, "The Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New," *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, Vol. 1, eds. P. R. Ackroyd, C. F. Evans (Cambridge: The University Press, 1970), p. 410.

⁷ France, *Jesus and the Old Testament*, pp. 40, 41.

⁸ See Price, pp. 30, 31.

⁹ "There is a difference between 'multiple sense' and 'multiple fulfillment.' Misunderstanding has arisen due to the failure to distinguish double sense from double fulfillment. Beecher speaks of *generic prophecy*, which he defines as 'one which regards an event as occurring in a series of parts separated by intervals, and expresses itself in language that may apply indifferently to the nearest part, or to the remoter parts, or to the whole—in other words a predication which, in applying to the whole of a complex of events, also applies to some of the parts.' To be sure, Beecher affirms, (if the Scriptures had many meanings interpretation would be equivocal, but manifold fulfillment of a generic prophecy preserves the one sense of Scripture. Both promises and threats work themselves out over a period of time and therefore may pass through several fulfillments. Or one may view the same event from more than one perspective. The destruction of Jerusalem is prophesied by our Lord and through it we have a perspective through which to envision the end of the world" (Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, pp. 233, 234).

Some commentators link this principle with the spiral view of history implied by Ec 1:9, 10. "God's work is the same in all time, although there are different degrees of development" (E. G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* [Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1890], p. 373).

¹⁰ Berkhof, *Principles of Biblical Interpretation*, p. 153.

¹¹ Peter Beyerhaus, "The Perils of Prophecy," *Christianity Today* (February 16, 1973), p. 58.

¹² See George Eldon Ladd, "Unity and Variety in New Testament Faith," *Christianity Today* (November 19, 1965), pp. 21-24. Henceforward in this volume we will use the terms "fulfillment" and "consummation" in this sense, whenever apocalyptic prophecy is under discussion.

¹³ For a nineteenth-century exposition of this principle, see Appendix C.

¹⁴ Berkhof, *Principles of Biblical Interpretation*, p. 130.

¹⁵ Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, p. 231.

¹⁶ Allis, *Prophecy and the Church*, pp. 25, 26.

¹⁷ Isaac Newton, pp. 251, 252.

¹⁸ Berkhof, *Principles of Biblical Interpretation*, p. 151; Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, p. 241.

¹⁹ Kevan, *Revelation and the Bible*, pp. 296-298.

²⁰ Thomas D. Bernard, *The Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, from plates procured from the American Tract Society, New York City, nd), pp. 137, 138, 239; italics supplied in part.

²¹ By church-centered we mean relating to the "people of God," literal Israel in Old Testament times and spiritual Israel since the cross.

²² Joseph Angus, *The Bible Hand-Book* (London: The Religious Tract Society, nd) pp. 285-290 (emphasis supplied).

²³ See also Dan 10:14; 1 Cor 14:22.

²⁴ This is particularly true in the Apocalypse with which the Bible closes. Note the following: "In their broader features the contrasts of the Apocalypse at once strike the eye. No reader can fail for a moment to perceive that, like Aaron when he stood between the dead and the living, St. John stands in this book between two antithetical and contrasted worlds. On the one hand he sees Christ, life, light, love, the Church of the living God, heaven, and the inhabitants of heaven; on the other he sees Satan, death, darkness, hatred, the synagogue of Satan, earth, and the dwellers upon earth. . . . It is not enough, however, to observe this. The contrasts of the book are carried out in almost every particular that meets us, whether great or small, whether in connexion with the persons, the objects, or the actions of which it speaks.

"If, at one time, we have an ever blessed and holy Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, at another we have that 'great antitriunity of hell,' the Devil, the Beast, and the False Prophet. If we have God Himself, even the Father, commissioning the Son and clothing Him with His authority and power, we have the dragon commissioning the first beast and giving him 'his power.' . . . If the Son . . . appears as a Lamb with seven horns, the dragon . . . has two horns like a lamb, though he speaks as a dragon. If the name of the one is Jesus or Saviour, the name of the other is Apollyon or Destroyer. If the one is the bright, the morning star shining in the heavens, the other is a star fallen out of heaven into the earth.

"If the one in carrying out His great work on earth is the

Lamb 'as though it had been slaughtered,' the other, as we are told by the use of the very same word, . . . has one of his heads 'as though it had been slaughtered unto death.' If the one rises from the grave and lives, there cannot be a doubt, when we read in precisely the same language of the beast that he hath the stroke of the sword and lived, that here also is a resurrection from the dead. If the description given of the Divine Being is 'He which is, and which was, and which is to come,' that given of diabolic agency is that it 'was, and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss.' . . .

"Many other particulars meet us in which the same principle of contrast rules. Believers are sealed with the seal of the Living God; unbelievers are marked with the mark of the beast. . . . The 'tribes of the earth' are in contrast with the tribes of Israel; . . . and the harlot Babylon with the Bride. . . . In the binding of Satan, . . . in the casting him into the abyss, in shutting it, and sealing it over him, we have a counterpart of the binding and burial of our Lord, and of the sealing of His tomb" (William Milligan, *Lectures on the Apocalypse* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1892), pp. 110-114).

²⁵ E. G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1898), p. 161.

²⁶ John Calvin, *The Institutes I*, vii, 4, 5; B. Ramm, *The Witness of the Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1959) and *The Pattern of Religious Authority* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1957), passim; A. Skevington Wood, *The Principles of Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1967), p. 94. Note particularly: "Not that the Spirit imparts a new revelation: He simply lights up what is already contained in the Word" (*ibid.*).

²⁷ E. G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing* (Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1956), p. 25.

²⁸ Dodd, *According to the Scriptures*, pp. 130, 109.

²⁹ E. E. Ellis, "Quotations in the New Testament," *The New Bible Dictionary*, ed. J. D. Douglas (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1962), p. 1071.

³⁰ F. F. Bruce, "Interpretation, Biblical" (*ibid.*, p. 568).

³¹ Roger Nicole, "New Testament Use of the Old Testament," *Revelation and the Bible*, ed. Carl F. H. Henry (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1958), p. 149.

Interpretation of Apocalyptic Prophecy and of Daniel in Particular

Now we turn to the specific interpretation of Daniel, the book acknowledged on all hands as being an example of the apocalyptic literary form.¹ Apocalyptic is distinguished from ordinary prophetic literature by the following characteristics:

1. Apocalyptic has for its basis Heaven-sent visions and dreams rather than "the word of the Lord."

2. These visions and dreams are usually characterized by symbolism, a symbolism more bizarre than that found elsewhere in Scripture. The symbols of apocalyptic usually transcend the concrete objects familiar to everyday life. For example, we have animals with multiple heads, horns, and wings. They speak and act as though human. Angels are prominent, sometimes standing by the side of the prophet, or above or beside him, sometimes flying through the midst of heaven. Time periods are enigmatically stated as so many "times" or "evenings and mornings," as well as in days and months.

3. The literary form of apocalyptic is chiefly prose, whereas much of the prophecy found elsewhere in the Old Testament is poetry (see RSV).

4. Apocalyptic is cosmic rather than national in its scope. Heaven and the great abyss, Christ

and Satan, good and demonic angels, the wicked and righteous viewed corporately—these characterize apocalyptic visions rather than merely reference to individual nations as in the prophets generally.

In view of these differences between apocalyptic prophecy and all other, it is true to say:

To be rightly interpreted apocalyptic writing must be understood in terms of its characteristic literary structure and theological emphasis. Central to its message is the theme of the great controversy, with particular focus upon the cataclysmic end of this world and the establishment of the new. All this is portrayed in highly symbolic language, which may not always admit of exact interpretation (see on Eze. 1:10). In speaking of supernal things, literal language is sometimes utterly inadequate to convey the subtler realities of heaven. In some respects the figurative language of apocalyptic is similar to that of parables, and the same precautions are to be taken in interpreting both.²

The most distinguishing feature of apocalyptic is its eschatological emphasis. It ever points to the dramatic and cataclysmic intrusion of divine power into the affairs of earth to vindicate that little flock which is so constantly in danger of being swallowed up by a cruel and rapacious world.

An apocalypse has been defined as follows:

An apocalypse is a book containing real or alleged revelations of heavenly secrets or of the events which will attend the end of the world and the inauguration of the kingdom of God.³

Apocalypics is a theological term of recent origin employed in biblical literature to designate a class of prophetic writings which refer to impending or future judgments, and the final glory of the Messianic kingdom. . . . The great theme of all these Scriptures is the holy kingdom of God in its conflict with the godless and persecuting powers of the world—a conflict in which the ultimate triumph of righteousness is assured.⁴

The underlying belief which inspired apocalyptic thought and determined its particular mode of expression was that God would shortly intervene catastrophically in human affairs, these having become so out of hand, so irredeemably corrupt, that nothing less could dispel the perplexities and vindicate the sufferings of the righteous. In other words, the apocalypists placed all their hopes in a new age, which could come only when this world order had passed away. It may well be that this eschatological emphasis accounts for the absorbing interest in unearthly symbols which distinguishes apocalyptic literature.⁵

At this point it must be stressed that there is a considerable difference as well as similarity between Biblical apocalyptic and the apocryphal productions. The latter often have the following characteristics in addition to those already mentioned:

1. *Pseudonymity*. Usually the name of an Old Testament worthy was given the work to recommend it.
2. *Rewritten history*. Frequently apocalypists write up history as though predicted beforehand (see section "The Date of Daniel" for a discussion of the issue as to whether Daniel contains genuine prediction or merely history).
3. *Determinism*. The ages are pictured as precisely determined so that human moral successes or failures can neither retard nor hasten the end of all things.
4. *Ethical passivity*. Usually the parenthetic feature is lacking in apocalypses. Comfort is administered rather than exhortation and correction.

Turning to Daniel we note:

1. It is not pseudonymous. The book itself is our only source of information regarding a hero of this name.⁶

2. The New Testament regards Daniel's prophecies as genuine. Christ declared that future events would fulfill that "spoken of by the prophet Daniel" (Mt 24:15).

3. Even the time periods of Daniel should not be pressed to teach determinism in view of the conditional element in certain prophecies (see Jer 18:7-10). Jonah proclaimed a time prophecy, but right behavior on the part of his listeners averted the prophesied judgment.

4. Daniel has a strong ethical emphasis (see, for example, 4:27; 5:20-23; 6:4; 9:1-20; 11:32-35; 12:10).

Because of such differences, even scholars who regard Daniel as a product of the Maccabean era refuse to classify Daniel as a "typical" apocalyptic work. A. C. Welch wrote, "It may be wiser . . . to interpret Daniel from his predecessors than from his successors."⁷ And a more recent scholar, Eric Heaton, suggests:

To study the book, therefore, in association with later apocalyptic writing is less illuminating than the familiar description would lead us to expect, and in some ways it is definitely misleading. . . .

Daniel has suffered the misfortune of being classed with his second-rate imitators.⁸

One characteristic of Biblical apocalyptic transcends anything of similar nature in other apocalyptic writings. When closely studied, this particular characteristic, as well as aiding exegesis, conveys the firm conviction that only divine inspiration could have called into being such a volume as Daniel.

The historical setting, particularly as elaborated by associated narrative, is a key to the accompanying apocalyptic visions.⁹ All the exegetical cruxes of the book—such as 7:9-13; 8:14; 9:24-27—are illustrated by the historical and narrative contexts.

This commentary will apply this neglected hermeneutical key to the chief eschatological passages of Daniel. While many on both sides, conservative and liberal, have acknowledged the

fact of the relationship between the narratives and the visions, no commentary has yet appeared applying this principle in depth.

Because of the importance of this matter, and because the interpretation of crucial passages here adopted stands or falls with it, we proceed to illustrate its validity both from the convictions of commentators and the testimony of the book itself. Appendix E brings together the observations on this subject found in many commentaries.¹⁰ The first quotations are taken from modern critical scholars who date the book in the second century BC. These are followed by other quotations from conservatives who believe in the sixth-century dating of Daniel. Thus the facts of the case are shown to be readily apparent to a wide variety of students whatever their prejudices and despite the frequent failure to use consistently the exegetical key provided by such facts. One representative commentator is cited here:

The stories and the visions are at one in affirming that the God of Israel is the sovereign ruler of the world in control of human history, and that the world would soon be brought to recognize his wisdom and might by the inauguration of his own universal and everlasting Kingdom.

Although the bulk of chs. 2-7 consists of popular stories, it is this section which conspicuously employs the fundamental ideas of Jewish religion and delineates with massive simplicity the religious issues and theological convictions which constitute the book's distinction and value. . . . As a theological document chs. 2-7 could stand alone, whereas chs. 8-12 seem to be in large measure dependent on the first section and are probably best regarded as a commentary on it (italics supplied). . . .

While consideration of the language would naturally lead us to reckon Daniel's vision in ch. 7 with the stories about Daniel in chs. 2-6, its form suggests that it belongs rather with the visions of chs. 8-12. . . . Taking this as our clue, we may concentrate on ch. 7 as holding the key to the critical problem and make bold to identify it as the creative centre of the whole book. It binds together and interprets the stories that go before it, just as it introduces and inspires the more explicit chapters of commentary which follow.

The stories of chs. 3 and 6 tell how men of faith can resist temptation and triumph in adversity. The concluding vision of this first section (ch. 7) binds

together the separate incidents and gives a theological interpretation of their meaning.

The symbol of God's purpose is the Son of Man, who stands for the divine order set over against human disorder.

When we have penetrated to this basic contrast, we have the clue not only to the Book of Daniel, but to the fundamental conflict in our human situation. In the book, the conflict is actualized in a specific historical situation, but it is part of the writer's greatness that he presents the issues of the particular crisis in terms drawn from so rich a variety of human experience and theological reflection, that his exposition achieves an uncommon approximation to universality.¹¹

We turn now to a brief summary of the evidence from the book itself.

The key lies right at the door. The opening chapter, and particularly the opening verses, summarize the chief themes of the book. Here is illustrated the conflict between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Babylon, representing all worldly powers. The sanctuary and its worshipers are seen in contrast to Babylon's temple house and its religious leaders—the Chaldeans. The inevitable clashing between the two systems of worship belonging to the opposing kingdoms is illustrated in the test over a minor requirement that violated the law of Jehovah, and the test ends with the vindication and elevation of the remnant who obey God implicitly. *These are the themes emphasized and elucidated in all the later chapters. Throughout the entire book, God, though unseen, is judging between those who serve Him and those who serve Him not. His invisible hand brings victory to the true worshipers.*

The following chart summarizes the motifs of both the narratives and the visions.

the kingdom of God	versus	the kingdoms of this world
true worship	-	false worship
the wisdom from above	-	the wisdom of this world
the law of God	-	the laws of men
truth	-	error
humility	-	pride
love	-	persecution
reverence	-	blasphemy
the Messiah (Christ)	-	antichrist
the Son of man	-	the abomination of desolation
the remnant	-	the majority
the angels of heaven	-	the wicked spirits
rewards	-	punishments

Not only the historical situations portrayed in Daniel but the characters themselves have didactic import. Daniel, a worshiper of the true God, who belongs to Israel's sanctuary and who purposes in his heart not to defile himself, is shown as one in whom no fault can be found except concerning the law of his God. An excellent spirit is said to be in him, and he is greatly beloved. Possessing the spirit of prophecy, himself a student of time prophecy, the product of true religious education, Daniel is a picture of the saints of God in every era and especially in the last days. Not only is he devout before God, a man of prayer and Bible study, but he is meek before men, kind, courteous, and tenderhearted.

In contrast to Daniel, who represents the people of God and who dimly points to Christ Himself, we have characters such as Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and Darius, who through perversity, weakness, or malice, are found insulting the King of heaven and propagating idolatrous worship. These men of pride and blasphemy persecute all who will not conform,

and they fittingly portray the antichrist and his representatives in all ages. The foregoing from expositors and the text itself demonstrate that *what the prophecies have to say in chapters 7-12 of Daniel is first acted out in the narratives of chapters 1-6*. The precise application of this principle to the key passages of the book is left to the commentary that follows.

The last point that should be made regarding the interpretation of the apocalyptic prophecies of Daniel is that the Christian exegete should be guided by Christ's own interpretation of this book as shown in the New Testament, particularly in the Olivet discourse, and by the later visions given by Christ to John on Patmos. Paul, Christ's representative, also comments upon Daniel's prophecies of the antichrist in 2 Th 2. Thus these eschatological portions of the New Testament are indispensable for the correct interpretation of Daniel for our own times.¹²

The following chart exemplifies this principle, showing Christ's use of Daniel in His sermon on the end of the world.

The Usage of Daniel by the Olivet Discourse

Markan passages compared with parallels in Daniel

Mark 13

"... when these things are all to be accomplished" (v. 4).

"... wars and rumors of wars" (v. 7).

"This must take place" (v. 7).

"You will be hated by all for my name's sake. But he who endures to *the end* will be saved" (v. 13).

"... the desolating sacrilege set up where it ought not be" (v. 14).

Daniel

"... all these things would be accomplished" (12:7).

"Tidings ... shall alarm him, and he shall go forth with great fury to ... destroy" (11:44; also 9:26).

"... what will be" (2:28).

"They shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plunder, for some days ... to refine and to cleanse them and to make them white, until the time of *the end*" (11:33-35).

"Your people shall be delivered" (12:1).

"... the transgression that makes desolate" (8:13).

Apocalyptic Prophecy

"Let the reader understand" (v. 14).

"... such tribulation as has not been from the beginning of the creation which God created until now" (v. 19).

"... if the Lord had not shortened the days" (v. 20).

"False Christs and false prophets will arise and show signs and wonders" (v. 22).

"... the Son of man coming in clouds with great power and glory" (v. 26).

Daniel uses the thought of understanding over a score of times. See particularly 8:15, 16, 17; 9:2, 22, 23; 10:1; 11:33; 12:8.

"And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation" (12:1).

"Seventy weeks of years are decreed concerning your people" (9:24).

"He shall give no heed to the gods of his fathers" (11:37).

"Behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man. . . . And to him was given dominion and glory and kingdom" (7:13, 14).

¹ See *Journal for Theology and the Church*, Vol. 6, 1969; *Interpretation*, Vol. xxv, No. 4, 1971. Both journals in these respective issues are wholly devoted to this topic. D. S. Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1964) is the present classic in this area.

² SDA BC, Vol. 7, p. 724.

³ George Eldon Ladd, "Apocalyptic, Apocalypse," *Baker's Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Everett F. Harrison (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960), p. 50.

⁴ Milton S. Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics* (New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1911), p. 338.

⁵ Martin Kiddle, *The Revelation of St. John*, The Moffatt New Testament Commentary, Vol. 16 (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1940), pp. xxii, xxiii.

⁶ It is improbable that the "Daniel" of Eze 14:14, 20; 28:3 is

identical with the Daniel of our book.

⁷ Welch, p. 129.

⁸ Heaton, pp. 35-37.

⁹ This is true of Revelation, the last Biblical apocalypse, as well as of Daniel. It is hardly by chance that this book which speaks so much of tribulation and the ultimate heavenly rest should begin with the exiled John sentenced to the prison of Patmos by Rome, the new Babylon, yet visited by Christ on the Sabbath day.

¹⁰ See Appendix E.

¹¹ Heaton, pp. 19; 49, 50; 48, 49; 102; italics supplied.

¹² See excursus: "The New Testament Use of the Old Testament," p. 56.

Contemporary Systems of Interpretation

The great bulk of interpreters espousing a system acceptable to them for intellectual or other reasons can be categorized according to their particular exegetical approach. The systems discussed here are preterism, futurism, idealism, and historicism.

Preterism: This system views the apocalyptic prophecies as having a contemporary or near-contemporary fulfillment. Those who view Daniel as being written in the second century BC are obviously preterist in interpreting the book. *Thus the vast majority of modern commentaries fall into this category.*

Not all preterists are antisupernaturalists. Some accept the late dating for Daniel, yet believe it to be an inspired volume. They hold that the Old Testament God, while employing an apocalyptic style speaking of the past as though it were future, also reveals divine insights regarding days to come. Most commentators on the Book of Revelation who are preterist believe that book to have been chiefly fulfilled in the first century of our era.

The empires of Dan 2 and 7 are usually understood by preterists as Babylon, Media, Persia, and Greece. The little horns of chapters 7 and 8 are believed to be identical, namely Antiochus Epiphanes. Even the prophecy of the

seventy weeks is made to terminate in the days of the Syrian antichrist. The preterist interpreter, to understand Daniel, always looks to the past—the days prior to and including the times of Antiochus IV.

Futurism: As the name implies, this system of interpretation is practically the reverse of the former. It projects either all or important sections of prophecy to the future, on the basis that such books as Daniel and Revelation concern the final crises and therefore contain a vast lacuna in their portrayal of the centuries. Most futurists say, for example, that the symbols employed by historicists as applying to the Papacy will have their true fulfillment in a future antichrist. These interpreters believe that all the great lines of prophecy in Daniel, including the seventy weeks, break off at the cross and resume by portraying the end of the age. Thus there would be in Daniel and Revelation no great prophetic waymarks for the guidance of the church during the Christian dispensation whereby believers might know where they stood in the stream of history and whether they were approaching the great denouement.

The rise of the futurist system coincided with the Reformation emphasis on historical interpretation of the prophecies. Beginning prior to the Reformation with groups such as the Waldenses,

and continuing beyond it by centuries, what came to be called the Protestant or historical system of interpretation emphasized that the Papacy was the antichrist of Scripture and that "the great tribulation" of Scripture was the long period of papal supremacy. In reaction, two learned Jesuits, Alcazar and Ribera, formulated the preterist and futurist systems respectively.¹

The former suggested that the prophecies regarding antichrist had been fulfilled before the popes ever ruled at Rome, and the latter taught that such prophecies applied to a future supernatural individual who would dominate the world for three and a half years. Futurism seemed a reversion to the positions taken by the early church on prophecy, but it should be remembered that such positions were taken in the early centuries on the grounds that Christ was about to come and that therefore all that the prophecies foretold had to be condensed into a few short years. It was the unfolding of the centuries that brought the natural change to the method of historicism.

Protestantism generally has come to adopt the futurist system. It is interesting to trace the change. In the mid-nineteenth century, historicist interpreters who proclaimed the approaching end of the 2300 "years" of Dan 8:14 encountered some who believed that a thousand years of peace must precede the coming of the Lord. The latter group "spiritualized" Rev 20 so as to make the first resurrection of verses 4 and 5 a great revival on earth. In response to this, some believers in the near advent of Christ began to stress "literal" interpretation of the prophecies in contrast to the historical system which had emphasized the symbolic nature of prophecy.²

Famous prophetic conferences such as those of Albury Park, Powerscourt, and the Dublin and Plymouth meetings were the source of the teachings which have come to characterize most modern positions. Many reviewers of the conferences feel that the teachings advocated were correct in their stress on the nearness of the coming of the Lord but wrong with reference to many details associated with that event. For example, Edward Irving, a devout and able preacher, attended the meetings at Albury Park. Subsequently ecstatic tongues-speaking broke out in his

congregation. The idea of a "secret rapture" of believers before the coming of the Lord had its origins in an ecstatic "utterance" at Irving's church.³

It was J. N. Darby, an earnest Christian lawyer, who had most to do with the development of that type of futurism, commonly called dispensationalism, which dominates Protestant Fundamentalism today. In 1827 he entered that fellowship at Dublin which later flowered at Plymouth in England and became known as the Brethren movement. The Brethren included a number of remarkable leaders, such as B. W. Newton, S. P. Tregelles, George Müller, and William Kelly, who were outstanding in piety and learning. Not all the Brethren followed Darby in the idea of a pretribulation secret rapture, but the group that did follow him became the most influential for the modern world scene. According to H. A. Ironside, Newton "considered Mr. Darby's dispensational teaching as the height of speculative nonsense."⁴ Tregelles also dissented and left the Brethren movement. The most well-known of modern Brethren, F. F. Bruce, is no partisan of Darby's.

To understand dispensationalism, the heart of most modern futurism, one could do no better than to study the notes in a Scofield Bible or the systematic theology of L. S. Chafer. In sharp contrast to the teachings of the Protestant Reformers, the system teaches that the ancient promises and blessings addressed to Israel are *not* now inherited by the church but still apply to the Jewish race. Says Scofield: "Prophecy does not concern itself with history as such, but only with history as it affects Israel and the Holy Land."⁵

An illustration of the exegesis of these believers is the view that the supposed increasing rainfall in Palestine in recent years is a fulfillment of the promise of "the latter rain" in Joel. A much more important view is their position on the seventy weeks of Dan 9:24-27. It is taught that a great gap of about twenty centuries intervenes between the end of the 69th week at the time of Christ's triumphant entry in Passion Week and the future commencement of the 70th week, to be marked by God's renewed dealings with the Jews.

Dispensationalists gain their name from the belief that history can be divided into seven dispensations, with each dispensation representing a different way in which God has tested man's obedience. For example, from Sinai to Calvary is thought of as a dispensation of law, with grace as the predominant factor since the cross.⁶

Not all futurists are dispensationalists. Famous futurists of the past who were not dispensationalists include Theodor Zahn and Abraham Kuyper. Today, men such as Dr. George Eldon Ladd view dispensationalism as a tissue of aberrations. Books such as *The Blessed Hope* and *Crucial Questions About the Kingdom of God* by Dr. Ladd repudiate such beliefs as the secret rapture and the restriction of the prophetic promises to the literal Jews. Futurists such as Ladd agree with the Protestant Reformers that the Old Testament predictions regarding Israel now apply to the church, even if they also hold to the beliefs that a Jewish remnant is yet to be saved and the millennium is to take place on earth. Says Ladd:

This reign of God, inaugurated by Christ, calls into being a new people. The Jewish people rejected this kingdom, and it was therefore taken from them, who by history, background, and religion ought to have been the "sons of the kingdom" (Matt. 8:12), and was given to a people who would receive it and manifest the righteousness which the kingdom must require (Matt. 21:43). This is the Church, the body of those who have accepted Christ and so submitted themselves to the reign of God.⁷

That Ladd is correct in saying that the church is now the Israel of God is clearly taught in such passages as Mt 21:33-43 (cf. 1 Pe 2:4-10; Rom 2:28, 29; Gal 3:28, 29; 6:14-16; Php 3:3).

We repeat, it would be unfair to regard all futurists as cherishing those dispensationalist positions that have come to characterize futurism in the mind of most Christians. Similarly, it is just as wrong to say that those are in error who see in Daniel and Revelation teaching that was relevant for them to whom such works were first written. *Some of the greatest of modern believing scholars retain what is correct in both preterism and futurism without sharing the errors found in such systems.* They are led to do so by such passages of

Scripture as Mt 24 which clearly teach that there was to be a great crisis in the first century (at the time of the siege of Jerusalem in AD 70), that there will be another affecting spiritual Israel in the very last days, and that therefore Dan 12:1, from which Christ quoted in Mt 24:21, applies both to the first and the last centuries of our era, as well as to the great era of persecution during the Middle Ages.⁸ The apotelesmatic principle preserves what is true in all the systems of prophetic interpretation and yet discards the dross. Dr. George Beasley-Murray illustrates this sound principle when, in the introduction to his commentary on Revelation, he says:

The "futurist" view was that of the earliest centuries of the church and is widely held by evangelical Christians today. In its popular form, however, it is open to serious criticism, in that the historical setting of the book is almost wholly ignored. Indeed, it is often said that John wrote the Revelation not for his own age but for the church of the end-time. Hence the book is made to yield information and ideas such as the prophet had never dreamed of. Vagaries of this sort drive many readers to value the book solely from an aesthetic viewpoint, denying that it ever had a specific occasion in view.

The symbols, nevertheless, do mean something. John was more than a poet setting forth in vague images the triumph of God over all evil. He wrote for the churches under his care with a practical situation in view, viz. the prospect of the popular Caesar-worship of his day being enforced on all Christians. No man who said "Jesus is Lord" could also confess "Caesar is Lord"; the latter demand threatened the existence of the whole church of God. Grasping the principles involved, John was given to see the logical consummation of the tendencies at work, mankind divided to the obedience of Christ or antichrist. On the canvas of John's age, therefore, and in the colour of his environment, he pictured the last great crisis of the world, not merely because, from a psychological viewpoint, he could do no other, but because of the real correspondence between his crisis and that of the last days. As the church was then faced with a devastating persecution by Rome, so will the church of the last days find itself violently opposed by the prevailing world power.⁹

Compare with this statement similar ones from E. G. White, who spanned significant portions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

In the Revelation are portrayed the deep things of God. . . . Its truths are addressed to those living in the last days of this earth's history, as well as to those living in the days of John. Some of the scenes depicted in this prophecy are in the past, some are now taking place; some bring to view the close of the great conflict between the powers of darkness and the Prince of heaven.¹⁰

The study of the Revelation directs the mind to the prophecies of Daniel, and both present most important instruction, given of God to men, concerning events to take place at the close of this world's history.

To John were opened scenes of deep and thrilling interest in the experience of the church. He saw the position, dangers, conflicts, and final deliverance of the people of God. He records the closing messages which are to ripen the harvest of the earth, either as sheaves for the heavenly garner or as fagots for the fires of destruction. Subjects of vast importance were revealed to him, especially for the last church, that those who should turn from error to truth might be instructed concerning the perils and conflicts before them. None need be in darkness in regard to what is coming upon the earth.¹¹

Note how these writers emphasize the truths present in both preterism and futurism as well as historicism. They begin with the contemporary meaning of the prophecy but end by discussion of the final conflict.

Idealism: This school of interpreters cuts the Gordian knot of the problem of finding historical events to fulfill the prophecies. It is rather contended that it is not the purpose of prophecy to inform the church regarding future events. Instead, prophecy is to be understood as purely a symbolic form of instruction regarding eternal truths about good and evil. Most idealists are preterists. Milligan's well-known commentary on Revelation is a typical example of this type of approach.

Historicism: This system of interpretation, also known as the Protestant system because it was cherished during the centuries surrounding the Reformation, stresses the fact that prophecy has *continuity* as its chief characteristic and that therefore the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation are to be interpreted as signifying events commencing at the time of the prophecy but surveying all later centuries until the end of time.

Thus in Dan 2 the prophecy of the image begins with Babylon and continues with Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, Rome's divisions as represented in modern Europe, and finally the return of Christ.

Wrote Alford: "Historical Interpreters . . . hold that the prophecy [Revelation] embraces the whole history of the church and its foes from the time of its writing to the end of the world." He adds, "It seems to me indisputable that the book does speak of things past, present, and future: that some of its prophecies are already fulfilled, some are now fulfilling, and others await their fulfilment."¹²

One of the simplest ways of assuring one's self of the truth taught by the historical system is to read Rev 12, which obviously deals with the beginning of the Christian church, its later history, and its final contest with the powers of evil. The study of passages such as Dan 7 brings a similar conviction.¹³

Another argument for the historical system is that its proponents believe this method to be in harmony with Christ's own words about prophecy. "I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place, you may believe" (Jn 14:29; see also 13:19; 16:4). Here our Lord specifically tells us that the primary purpose of prophecy is not to make us prophets but to establish us in the faith when fulfilling events are recognized as the accomplishments of that foretold. That which characterizes the historical school of interpretation has been the ever-enlarging concept of truth with the passing of the centuries and the actual fulfillment of the key events long prophesied. Thus definitive detailed understanding of specific prophecies has always followed rather than preceded the fulfillment. Prophetic truth is an unrolling scroll. This view of prophecy suggested by Christ's words denies the extremes of preterism, futurism, and idealism.

Having now viewed the respective systems as wholes, what counsel can be given to one who comes to the task of exegesis with the sole intent of discovering truth regardless of whether it supports or wrecks systems?

It must be said that each of the systems is right in what it affirms and wrong in what it denies.

Preterism is right when it says that prophecy has something to say to the people living at the time of the prophecy, but it is wrong when it asserts that that "something" is the whole intent of the visions of the seer. Futurism is right when it affirms that the final crisis, the impending conflict awaiting the world, is a central focus of prophecy, but it is wrong when it denies that the prophetic pictures have meaning for prior crises. Idealism is right in affirming that prophets symbolically illustrate the principles governing the great controversy between good and evil. It is wrong in denying that specific events are foretold. The very nature of apocalyptic was concerned with those events in history which foreshadowed the coming of the kingdom of God.

Historicists are right in looking for the prophetic scroll to be gradually unrolled, having meaning for its first and last readers and those in between. But they are wrong if they minimize the stress on the future climactic struggle that the prophetic word emphasizes. Almost all commentators, whether futurist or historicist, affirm that Rev 13, for example, points to a crisis soon to overtake the world. They agree that most of what follows in the Book of Revelation is likewise related to the consummation of all things. Furthermore, while historicists criticize futurists for their belief in a personal antichrist, this is usually done on the ground that the futurist teaching is presented to the exclusion of exposing the antichrist, which dominated apostate Christianity for many centuries. But many historicists also believe in a personal antichrist to come. It is widely held that Satan himself will ultimately be the great antichrist as he counterfeits the return of our Lord.¹⁴ Again, it should be pointed out that both futurists and historicists recognize that the last prophecy in Daniel concerns the fate of God's people "in the latter days."¹⁵ If the apotelesmatic principle were more widely understood, some differences between systems would be automatically resolved.

The following scholars urge us to retain what is right in each system and to avoid what is wrong. Undoubtedly this counsel springs from a deep study of the weaknesses and strengths of the respective prophetic approaches, and we would all do well to heed it. It should be noticed that these

statements imply the correctness of the apotelesmatic principle.

The final conclusion on the chronological methods of interpretation is that all contain some elements of truth, and that all are in a measure overstrained.¹⁶

Having regard for the fact that equal scholarship and spirituality may be found among the advocates of all these interpretations, it is difficult to believe that one of them must be right and three of them wrong. The Book is too big to be crushed into the mould of any one interpretation, and no one school of interpreters has a monopoly of insight and understanding.

The studies of men like Tyconius, Grotius, De Wette, Ewald, Bleek, Farrar, Vitringa, Newton, Bengel, Elliott, B. Wordsworth, Alford, Guinness, Bullinger, Milligan, Boyd Carpenter, Lee, and many others, cannot be set aside in the interests of the view of any one of them, but rather, we must look for the common elements of truth in their various systems of interpretation.

In his *Advancement of Learning*, quoted by Angus, Bacon has said that Divine prophecies "have springing and germinant accomplishment throughout many ages, though the height or fulness of them may refer to some one age"; and Bishop Boyd Carpenter, to like purpose: "The Praeterist may be right in finding early fulfilments, and the Futurist in expecting undeveloped ones, and the Historical interpreter is unquestionably right in looking for them along the whole line of history; for the words of God mean more than one man or one school of thought can compass. The visions of the Book do find counterparts in the occurrences of human history. They have had these, and they will yet have these fulfilments, and these fulfilments belong neither wholly to the past, nor wholly to the future. The prophecies of God are written in a language which can be read by more than one generation."

In other words, no one of these interpretations is by itself adequate. It is by a synthesis of them that we approach to the truth. History is the fulfilment of prophecy throughout the length of it, and there is good ground for believing that at the end of this age there will be a crisis-period in which all the characteristics of the present dispensation will be gathered up, accentuated, and consummated.¹⁷

With the *Idealists*, I am willing enough to see, in the apocalyptic visions and symbols, vivid illustrations of spiritual principles, struggles, and issues, even though these are not the first interpretation of

the book. With the *Praeterists* I readily see in the precursors and crash which ended the apostolic era a fulfilment, a kind of *advance* fulfilment, even though not the *final* fulfilment; just as our Lord's predictions in Matthew xxiv. 4-31 all had a fulfilment *then* except the actual return of our Lord Himself. With the *Historicists* I can see recurrent correspondences and fulfilments all through the present age, inasmuch as "history repeats itself," and God has overruled events to adumbrate and lead onward to the *ultimate* fulfilment.¹⁸

None of the views has proved completely satisfying, and it is probable that a true view would combine elements from more than one of them. The outstanding merit of preterist views is that they give the book meaning for the men of the day in which it was written, and, whatever else we may say of the book, this insight must be retained. Historicist views similarly see the book as giving light on the Church throughout its history, and this cannot be surrendered. Futurist views take with the greatest seriousness the language of the book about the end-time. The book does emphasize the ultimate triumph of God and the events associated with it. Nor can the idealist view be abandoned, for the book does bring before us a stirring challenge to live for God in days when the opposition is fierce. Moreover, the Christian must always welcome the assurance that God's triumph is sure.¹⁹

An understanding of the truths suggested in these statements will save us not only from errors of interpretation but also from errors in charity when we discern an item in an exegete's commentary that seems to reflect an element of some system we have been accustomed to rejecting *in toto*. Tennyson's words, though not written in this connection, are appropriate:

Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be;
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.²⁰

¹⁸ It will probably come as a shock to many modern futurists to be told that the first scholar in relatively modern times who returned to the patristic futuristic interpretation was a Spanish Jesuit named Ribera. In 1590, Ribera published a commentary on the Revelation as a counter-interpretation to the prevailing view among Protestants which identified the Papacy with the Antichrist. Ribera applied all of Revelation but the earliest chapters to the end time rather than to the history of the

Church. Antichrist would be a single evil person who would be received by the Jews and would rebuild Jerusalem, abolish Christianity, deny Christ, persecute the Church and rule the world for three and a half years" (George Eldon Ladd, *The Blessed Hope* [Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1956], pp. 37, 38).

¹⁹ "The major claim of those who represent the dispensational school is that they 'take Scripture as it stands' and interpret the Bible literally. One writer says, 'No interpretation can be as all satisfactory that does not allow words to have their natural meaning.' This does not take into consideration the important fact that we must use natural language to discuss spiritual things. If we cannot give natural language a spiritual meaning, we are left without a medium of expression. Those who boast of being literalists and who describe all others by the reproachful term of 'spiritualizers' are not always too consistent, nor do they themselves practice the method they commend to others. They insist upon the principle of literal interpretation only when it is found useful to maintain a certain point of view. . . ."

"Let us go back to Genesis 3:15 and see whether the very first promise of the Redeemer was fulfilled literally. All Christians agree that this promise was fulfilled in Christ, but no one has ever claimed that His heel was literally bruised by a serpent or that He crushed a serpent's head. The twenty-second Psalm is accepted by all Christians as a prophetic description of our Lord's passion, but it was not fulfilled literally. Notice some of its words: 'Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. . . . For dogs have compassed me. . . . Save me from the lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.' No literalist would contend that this was ever fulfilled 'literally.' . . ."

"The same principle applies to the works of the prophets. There is no limit to the depths of absurdity to which we shall descend by a literal interpretation. What will the literalist make of Isaiah 7:20, 'In the same day will the Lord shave with a razor that is hired'? . . . Will the literalist claim that the promises concerning Christ and His forerunner have been fulfilled literally: 'Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low'? Will he further insist that Christ is a twig or a branch growing out of the stem of Jesse? As a matter of fact, many of the promises which the dispensationalist interprets to predict the restoration of the natural Israel declare that David will be their king, but David is spiritualized to mean Christ while the rest of the message is usually given a literal interpretation" (George L. Murray, *Millennial Studies—a Search for Truth* [Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1948], pp. 36-38. See also Allis, *Prophecy and the Church*, pp. 16-32).

²⁰ Ladd, *The Blessed Hope*, pp. 40, 41.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

²² See 1917 ed., p. 918, on Dan 11. The revised Scofield Bible is more scholarly, not quite so rigid in many areas, but retains for the most part the characteristic dispensational approach.

²³ Dispensationalists do believe in grace prior to the cross, as C. C. Ryrie has made clear in his *Dispensationalism Today*

(Chicago: Moody Press, 1965), pp. 119-122. But they do not believe "that Old Testament saints under the law exercised personal faith in Jesus Christ" (*ibid.*, p. 130).

⁷ George Eldon Ladd, *Crucial Questions About the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1952), p. 131.

⁸ G. E. Ladd, *Jesus and the Kingdom* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1964), pp. 305, 307, 142. E. G. White says, "When He referred to the destruction of Jerusalem, His prophetic words reached beyond that event to the final conflagration in that day when the Lord shall rise out of His place to punish the world for their iniquity, when the earth shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain. This entire discourse was given, not for the disciples only, but for those who should live in the last scenes of this earth's history. . . ."

"The same deceptions practiced prior to the destruction of Jerusalem have been practiced through the ages, and will be practiced again" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 628).

⁹ George R. Beasley-Murray, "Revelation," *The Revised New Bible Commentary*, ed. Donald Guthrie (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1970), pp. 1279, 1280.

¹⁰ Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1911), p. 584.

¹¹ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1888), pp. 341, 342.

¹² Henry Alford, *The New Testament for English Readers* (Cambridge: Deighton, Bell, and Co., 1872), ch. XXII, sec. V, pars. 2, 16, pp. 348, 351.

¹³ "Among the events made subjects of prophecy in the Old Testament were the birth of Isaac, the rapid increase of Israel, the descent into Egypt, the sufferings of the Israelites under the Pharaohs, the duration of their bondage, the exodus, the forty years in the desert, the possession of Canaan, its very division among the tribes; the characters of Saul, David, Solomon, and many other individuals; the building of the temple, the division of the kingdom into two, the Assyrian invasion, and Israel's captivity; the Babylonian invasion and the seventy years' captivity of Judah, the return from Babylon, the time to elapse, and many of the events to occur, between it and the coming of Messiah the Prince, his birth, character, true nature, ministry, sufferings, and death; the ministry of John the Baptist, the rejection of Israel, the call of the Gentiles and the destruction of Jerusalem under Titus.

"Was Israel ever left during a long period, full of momentous changes, and events of solemn national importance, without the light and guidance of prophecy? Is there in their history any 'mighty unrepresented vacuum,' of the occurrences of which we can say, great as are these events in human estimation, they are deemed unworthy of Divine notice in prophecy? If such be the case there will be a distinct analogy, on which to base the theory, that the Apocalypse is still wholly unfulfilled. But such is not the case. The chain is almost unbroken, and though four hundred

years elapsed between the last of the prophets and the coming of Messiah, Daniel's prophecy fills in the events of the interval, so that no gap of even a century occurs in the long series.

"Is it likely that there should be no analogy, but a perfect contrast, in the history of the antitypical Israel? Has she no Egypt to leave and no wilderness to traverse, no land to inherit, no oppressors to tyrannize over her, no evil kings to mislead her, no reformers and deliverers to arise, no Babylon to carry her captive, no temple to rebuild, no Messiah to look for, no judgments to apprehend, no rest to inherit? Are hers less important than theirs? Are her foes so much more obvious, her dangers so much more patent, that it should be superfluous to supply her with prophetic light to detect them? Because they were an earthly people, and she a heavenly church, is she therefore not on earth, and not amid the ungodly? Are her enemies heavenly because the church is so? Nay, but most earthly, for the wicked spirits against whom the church wrestles, wage their warfare incarnate in earthly, sensual, devilish systems, and in actual men, as did Satan in the serpent in Eden. Every conceivable reason would suggest her greater need of prophetic light.

"Now the Apocalypse is the book of the New Testament which answers to 'the prophets' of the Old. If then it contain predictions of the first spread of Christianity, of the hosts of martyrs who sealed their testimony with their blood, during the ten pagan persecutions, of the reception of Christianity by Constantine and the Roman empire, of the gradual growth of corruption in the church, of the irruptions of the Goths and Vandals, and the break up of the old Roman empire into ten kingdoms, of the rise and development of popery, of the rise and rapid conquests of Mohammedanism, of the long continued and tremendous sufferings of the church under papal persecutions, of the fifty millions of martyrs slain by the Romish Church, of the enormous political power attained by the popes, of their Satanic craft and wickedness, of the Reformation, of the gradual decay of the papal system and the extinction of the temporal power of the popes: if it contain predictions of these events, which we know to have taken place in the history of the antitypical Israel, then we have a perfect analogy with the Old Testament.

"If, on the other hand, the Apocalypse alludes to none of these events, but passing them all over in silence, gives only the history of an antichrist who has not yet appeared, and of judgments not yet commenced, nor to be commenced until the church is in heaven, then instead of a striking scriptural analogy, we have a glaring and most unaccountable contrast" (H. G. Guinness, *The Approaching End of the Age*, pp. 123-125).

¹⁴ See Don F. Neufeld, "The Antichrist," *Review and Herald* (July 29, 1965), pp. 4, 5.

¹⁵ Futurists who are dispensationalists literalize the Israel referred to in Daniel's final vision. They look for a restoration to Palestine of the literal Jewish nation as fulfillment of prophecy and also for a restoration of the temple and its services finally to be interrupted by some power from the literal north. Interpreters who are not dispensationalists apply the prophecy to the "Israel of God" whose circumcision is of the heart and not of the flesh, who because they are Christ's are counted as "Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise" (Gal 6:15; Rom 2:28, 29; Gal 3:29). The restoration of the sanctuary points to the last work

Systems of Interpretation

for and by the church of Christ, while the "king of the north" points to the spiritual Babylon of Rev 14-18.

¹⁶ Merrill C. Tenney, *Interpreting Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1957), p. 146.

¹⁷ G. Scroggie, *Know Your Bible* (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1965), pp. 368, 369.

¹⁸ J. S. Baxter, *Explore the Book* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, nd), Vol. 6, p. 340.

¹⁹ L. L. Morris, "Book of Revelation," *The New Bible Dictionary*, eds. J. D. Douglas et al (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1962), p. 1095.

²⁰ Alfred Lord Tennyson, "In Memoriam A. H. H."

Commentary

Preface to Daniel 1

The Book of Daniel was written with consummate skill. Even from a literary viewpoint this slender volume repays the diligent student tenfold. The opening chapter, which is the prologue (as chapter 12 is the epilogue), reveals to close investigation an artistry and finesse that the casual reader misses.

We find in chapter 1 the seeds of all the rest of the book. All the major themes to be developed later by narrative and vision are present in this introductory passage. For example, the Bible has often been referred to as a "tale of two cities," Jerusalem and Babylon, both of which are first mentioned in Genesis (14:18; 11:9) and finally in Revelation (3:12; 21:2; 21:10; 14:8; 18:2; 16:19; 17:5). The initial verse of Daniel names both cities as a clue to the conflict between true and false religion to be subsequently unfolded.

The statement in 10:1—"the word was true, and it was a great conflict," or as Moffatt¹ has it, "a revelation was made to Daniel, . . . the true revelation of a great conflict"—admirably fits the book from its very commencement. The great controversy is between Christ and Satan, and the conflict over worship is its theme. The first "battle" in this world over the issue of worship transpired at the very gates of Eden, when one brother slew the other. "And why did he murder

him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous" (1 Jn 3:12). But of more interest to us probably is the fact that the *last* battle of earth is also to be over the manner of worship. History begins and ends with religious conflict (see Gen 4 and Rev 16:13, 14).

Both of the famous apocalypses of Scripture, Daniel and Revelation, foretell that the final crisis of history will revolve around the issue of allegiance to God and His revealed manner of worship. Not communism nor any other political "ism" is to decide the fate of earth's multitudes but rather the supreme concern of every human being's relationship to his Creator.

Note the following predictions from the Bible's last book: "Then I saw another beast which rose out of the earth; it had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon. It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants *worship the first beast*. . . . It deceives those who dwell on earth, bidding them make an image for the beast which was wounded by the sword and yet lived; and it was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast so that the image of the beast should even speak, and to cause *those who would not worship the image of the beast to be slain*" (Rev 13:11-15; italics supplied).

"Then I saw another angel flying in midheaven, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, . . . and he said with a loud voice, '*Fear God* and give him glory, for the hour of his judgment has come; and *worship him*.' . . . 'If any one worships the beast and its image, . . . he also shall drink the wine of God's wrath.' . . . 'Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus'" (Rev 14:6-12; italics supplied).

The first passage symbolically pictures the final religious confederacy that will endeavor to compel all men to submit to its form of legislated worship, an "image" or replica of the false worship of other eras. The second passage foretells a final call to all men to worship the Creator of heaven and earth and presents the warning that submission to false worship will bring eternal loss.

Because some of the imagery from both these passages is drawn from the Book of Daniel, only he who already understands "the prophet Daniel" in harmony with Christ's admonition so to do is in the position to understand John the revelator. What is there, then, in Daniel about this issue of worship?

Throughout its pages the conflict between true and false worship is graphically illustrated. The first half of the book is narration, and the second is prophetic revelation, but both halves revolve around the issue of worship. In six different forms the narrative portion shows the supremacy of the true God and His worshipers over the oppressive, idolatrous worship of Babylon and its successors.

Chapter 1 reveals that those who worship idols are inferior in wisdom to the worshipers of the Creator.

Chapter 2 describes how only a true worshiper could understand the mysteries of the future. Only Daniel could interpret the king's dream about "the latter days."

Chapter 3 tells how God can deliver from fiery ordeal those who refuse to submit to idolatrous worship.

Chapter 4 demonstrates the superiority of divine sovereignty over the sovereignty of the greatest secular man of the age. Nebuchadnezzar's "I" succumbs to the great "I AM." Self-worship

is shown to be self-destructive.

Chapter 5 teaches that sacrilege must inevitably bring retribution. The story of Belshazzar's profane feast climaxes in the terrifying handwriting of judgment on the wall. Man-made worship issues in a harvest of death.

Chapter 6 illustrates how the divine Lawgiver can defeat the persecuting programs of earthly lawgivers. The fiat of Darius falls to the ground, and Daniel emerges unhurt from the den of death.

The second half of Daniel proceeds to *teach* out by prophetic vision what had already been *acted* out in the narrative portion. The theme remains that of the conflict between true and false worship.

Thus the opening verses of Daniel illustrate the whole book. They tell of the conflict between Babylon and Jerusalem, between false worship and the true, between the kingdom of Satan and the kingdom of God. All that follows enlarges these themes.

We have also in Daniel's introductory verses the word *kingdom*, a key word of the book, occurring nearly sixty times in the singular—several times more often than the equivalent word in all the rest of the prophets together. This is certainly the book of the kingdom revealing that, despite appearances, the divine kingdom still rules over all and will ultimately be established in glory upon the earth—a vital theme of consolation for a time marked by the desolation of the sanctuary, the symbol of the theocracy, and the exile of its worshipers. *Every chapter of Daniel opens with a reference to kingly power, and every chapter unveils human kingdoms as oppressive and idolatrous, but temporary, systems in contrast to the reign of God, which alone is eternal because it is just and benevolent.*

As mentioned, the sanctuary ("the house of God") also meets us in this introduction. It was a microcosm of the kingdom of God, containing symbols of the presence of God and the heavenly host as well as the tables of that law which comprehended the principles intended to govern heaven and earth. The Shekinah, ark, mercy seat, symbolically garbed priests,² sacrifice, and incense were emblematic of rule and judgment as well as of the message of grace to rebels.

The fact so clearly taught in the book that the sanctuary is the symbol of the divine kingdom is a major key for interpreting such passages as 8:14; 9:24-27; 12:11-13. Too often these climactic prophetic passages have been interpreted apart from the light cast on them by the rest of the book. Many discussions on Dan 8:14, for example, proceed as though that passage were the only one in the whole volume mentioning the sanctuary, whereas chapters 1, 5, 8, 9, 11, and 12 also refer to it by name, and the other chapters do so by implication.³ The key verse, 8:14, speaks of the vindication of the sanctuary, that sanctuary defiled by Israel's sin and by the desolating work of the Gentile monarchies. The promise of cleansing and restoration in this verse becomes the seed of the rest of the book, finding its ultimate flowering in the references to judgment and rewards in chapter 12.

The allusions to the Babylonian temple in contrast to Israel's, the substitution of Babylonian names with their allusions to false gods for Jewish names enshrining references to Yahweh, and the conflict between idolatrous customs and true religion as seen in 1:7-16, all point up the overarching theme of Daniel. The ever-active, divine providence that rules and overrules is shown in the successful issue of the ten-day test.

Even the hint that others of their "sort" (v. 10, KJV) went the easy way of conformity is an allusion to the Old Testament teaching concerning the remnant, a faithful few who resisted worldly pressures and who one day would inherit Yahweh's kingdom.

Finally, the victory and exaltation of the loyal Hebrews over their fellows is a miniature of the final exaltation of the righteous described in 7:27 and 12:1-3, 13. Thus the chapter promises the final vindication of true worship and worshipers and shows that it is the path of loyalty to the law of God, the path of nonconformity, which alone leads home. The major principle spelled out in chapter 1 concerns what should be the determining motive in every sane person's life—to "seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be . . . [his] as well" (Mt 6:33).

¹ From *The Bible: A New Translation*, by James Moffatt. Copyright, 1954. Reprinted by permission of Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc.

² The very apparel of the heavenly visitors of chapter 10 is reminiscent of the clothing of the sanctuary priests.

³ For example, chapters 3, 4, and 6 are homilies against the violation of that law which resided in the most holy place of the sanctuary, and 7:25 mentions the same divine code.

Commentary on Daniel 1

1 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ²And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the vessels of the house of God; and he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his god, and placed the vessels in the treasury of his god.

As the first chapter summarizes the themes of the book, so these first two verses summarize chapter 1—conflict between the true and false systems of worship, with God overruling. “And the Lord gave Jehoiakim” tells us that it was by divine permission only that the Babylonian monarch secured his victory. Nebuchadnezzar was merely Heaven’s instrument to punish rebellious children. The Hebrew word for Lord, *Adonai*, means “possessor and owner of all.” Thus even amid the description of Israel’s calamity comes the assurance that God remains in control.

It should not be overlooked that Scripture elsewhere spells out the reason for the Babylonian captivity (see 2 Chr 36:14-21).

The judgment came because His people had broken His covenant law, as symbolized by their carelessness regarding the Sabbath day and the sabbatic year. Jeremiah had plainly promised that

Jerusalem would stand forever—impregnable to all the assaults of enemies—if Israel faithfully observed the Sabbath (Jer 17:20-27). The seventy-year absence of Israel from Palestine was parabolic as well as historic. It indicated God’s cleansing of the Sabbath that had been violated. Now the land, so long greedily used to the neglect of the rest laws, experienced an enforced sabbath (2 Chr 36:21).

Hundreds of pages have been written on the apparent contradiction between the allusion here to “the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim” and the reference to the same event in Jehoiakim’s fourth year in Jer 25:1. Increased understanding of the ancient accession year system of chronology has solved the problem. According to this method of reckoning, a king’s first year of reign began with the new year following his accession. When Daniel was taken captive, it was during Nebuchadnezzar’s accession years and Jehoiakim’s third year.

When Jeremiah had the vision recorded in Jer 25, it was Nebuchadnezzar's first year (the first full year after his accession year), hence Jehoiakim's fourth year.

Montgomery asserts that "there is no historical corroboration" for the event referred to in Dan 1:1. Many Old Testament introductions and commentaries repeat this contention. However, remember that few contemporary historical accounts of Nebuchadnezzar's reign exist. Also, the Biblical record does *not* say Nebuchadnezzar's siege was an entire success.

E. J. Young has written, "There is a strange silence in the verse. The reader would expect a statement to the effect that the entire city had fallen, but such a statement *is not given*."¹

The success of the Babylonian armies, so far as this record is concerned, is the capture of Judah's king and the receipt of some of the temple vessels, as well as the procuring of hostages. If Thomson's suggestion is correct, Nebuchadnezzar's armies captured the temple area of the city.²

According to Berosus, the Babylonian historian quoted by Josephus,³ Nebuchadnezzar after his victory over the Egyptians at Carchemish was compelled to interrupt his campaign and

hasten to Babylon because of the death of his father. Berosus also tells us that Nebuchadnezzar on this occasion left certain Jewish captives in the hands of others to be brought back at a slower pace. Thus the essentials of the account as given by Daniel are sufficiently vouched for.⁴

Yet two more criticisms have been made of this initial verse, namely that the spelling of the Babylonian leader is inaccurate and that he is called "king" before he actually became such. It is true that the more correct form of the Babylonian name is Nebukadre'ssar (Nebuchadrezzar—as in Jer 21:2, etc.). But it is also true that both forms of spelling are found in ancient documents. The Old Testament, with thirty-one instances of one form and twenty-seven instances of the other, but reflects what we find in Greek sources. As for the usage of "king" for Nebuchadnezzar, it is proleptic and not at all strange from one who at the time of writing had known the Babylonian monarch for over forty years. Even those who reject the historicity of Daniel are prepared to grant that the term as here used does not necessarily involve error or ignorance on the part of the writer.⁵

³Then the king commanded Ashpenaz, his chief eunuch, to bring some of the people of Israel, both of the royal family and of the nobility, 'youths without blemish, handsome and skilful in all wisdom, endowed with knowledge, understanding learning, and competent to serve in the king's palace, and to teach them the letters and language of the Chaldeans. ⁵The king assigned them a daily portion of the rich food which the king ate, and of the wine which he drank. They were to be educated for three years, and at the end of that time they were to stand before the king.

Ancient monarchs often adorned their courts with the most outstanding physical trophies of their conquests. Were all of these made eunuchs? This does not seem likely. The word *saris* sometimes comprehends any royal official. The pictorial reproduction found in ancient inscriptions of Assyrian court life with its variety of personalities, some with and some without beards,

indicates that both literal eunuchs and others, who were not so, attended the royal presence. R. H. Charles has commented that the desire to have men "without blemish" is hardly consistent with castrated individuals. The passages in Isa 39:7 probably should be understood as using "eunuch" in the general sense of a court attendant.

About what age were Daniel and his friends at

the time of the exile? The list of required qualifications indicates that these youths must have been at least sixteen to eighteen years of age. Joseph was around eighteen years old (see Gen 37:2) at the time of a similar experience. The description of the lads selected for the Babylonian court stresses two requirements: an innate intelligence and a cultivated or educated mind. The reference to their being "competent to serve" implies not only mental competence but physical. The Hebrew term elsewhere means "physical strength" (see Jgs 16:6; Job 39:11).

The word *Chaldeans* has come in for close scrutiny from commentators because Daniel alone in the Old Testament uses the word in two senses—ethnically of the Aramaeans who founded the Neo-Babylonian dynasty and professionally of a group of priestly scholars. The second usage has not appeared in any of the ancient inscriptions but is found in certain Greek writers such as Herodotus and Strabo. Because the first secular usage of the restricted meaning appears about 440

BC, the reference in Daniel has been taken by many as evidence for the late dating of the book.

However, it should be recognized that the usage by Herodotus (1:181) implies a long history of the term. He applies it in reference to Babylonian priests celebrating a yearly festival. This fact alone suggests that not only the festival but also its professional celebrants had long been known. Inasmuch as our extant records are considerably less than 10 percent of what once existed, any argument from silence alone is suspect. One thing is certain—no Maccabean writer setting forth a Jewish hero for his contemporaries would have ventured to suggest that Daniel had anything to do with heathen learning or a heathen caste. While the text does not specifically say that Daniel was admitted to a priestly order, and rather suggests political oversight, the risk of possible misunderstanding would have been too great for a fabricator of fiction.

⁶Among these were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishaël, and Azariah of the tribe of Judah. ⁷And the chief of the eunuchs gave them names: Daniel he called Belteshazzar, Hananiah he called Shadrach, Mishaël he called Meshach, and Azariah he called Abednego.

8 But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's rich food, or with the wine which he drank; therefore he asked the chief of the eunuchs to allow him not to defile himself.

The captives from Israel came "both of the royal family and of the nobility." Josephus assures us that Daniel was related to Zedekiah, one of Jehoiakim's successors. But the writer of this book refers to himself only as being "of the tribe of Judah" (v. 6). It is not likely that a large number is intended, but almost certainly the "some" from the two groups mentioned numbered more than the four later named. Thus we read that "among these were Daniel . . ." It would seem therefore that "the youths who . . . [ate] the king's rich food" (v. 13) included a number of Jews who conformed to their heathen environment.

The change of names was an obvious attempt at primitive brainwashing.⁸ The Jews were confronted by three matters relating closely to heathenism—Gentile learning, Gentile names, and Gentile customs, such as the eating of food offered to idols. The first two did not necessarily lead to conflict with their cherished faith, since much of Babylonian lore belonged to genuine science, and the Jews were not responsible for what others might call them. The third matter became an inevitable issue.

A well-instructed Israelite shunned rich, spiced foods on the basis that he was the property

of God and should not defile his body or lessen its usefulness in any way. Second, meats used by the Babylonians would not have been prepared the way Moses had instructed. Third, some of the foods eaten would have been among those believed to be unclean by the Jews. But most of all, eating and drinking involved an act of worship to idols in that the blessing of the gods was invoked upon the food. Inasmuch as the Torah had no

specific prohibitions regarding drink, we must see in this last aspect the cardinal one. It is also not too much to say that young men of the quality that these obviously were would be aware of the close connection between plain living and high thinking. Engaged as they were on a three-year course of study, their prospects of success would be enhanced or lessened according to the nature of their physical habits.⁷

⁹And God gave Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the chief of the eunuchs; ¹⁰and the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, "I fear lest my lord the king, who appointed your food and your drink, should see that you were in poorer condition than the youths who are of your own age. So you would endanger my head with the king." ¹¹Then Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; ¹²"Test your servants for ten days; let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink. ¹³Then let our appearance and the appearance of the youths who eat the king's rich food be observed by you, and according to what you see deal with your servants." ¹⁴So he hearkened to them in this matter, and tested them for ten days. ¹⁵At the end of ten days it was seen that they were better in appearance and fatter in flesh than all the youths who ate the king's rich food. ¹⁶So the steward took away their rich food and the wine they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.

At first, these verses seem almost a letdown. We read merely of a test over diet and its outcome. But stop a moment. The first test recorded in Holy Writ also seems pathetically insignificant. It, too, concerned appetite. Could it be that depth of love is best revealed in the little things? We might abhor a man who delivered his mother up to death in order to gain a king's ransom, but with what revulsion would we contemplate one who sold his mother for a few cents?

Then again, great doors often swing on little hinges. Does not this story, as well as Gen 3, illustrate Satan's mode of attack? Does he not ever endeavor to reach the citadel of the heart through the senses? Does not successful Christian living depend upon the adequate barricading of the senses? If the Spirit of God communicates with

man through the nerves of the mind and if these nerves are physical, reflecting the state of the stomach, what more important duty could there be than that of preserving that organ in the best possible condition? Did not Christ Himself begin His ministry by illustrating how victory was to be achieved in this very matter? See the record of His forty-day fast. Calvary, the salvation of the world, and the safeguarding of the universe were dependent upon Christ's submission of His appetites to the will of God.

The initial test is to be followed by others, but the outcome of the later tests was determined mainly by this initial test. The test over the acceptance of unclean and unhealthful food is succeeded by the situation described in Dan 3, calling for a positive affirmation of idolatry—the

worshipping of a golden image on the plains of Dura. Later came a more difficult searching ordeal. Only *cease* to do something belonging to your own worship. Just stop praying to God. This negative test is more rigorous than the preceding one at Dura. It would seem so much easier and permissible just to bypass one's visible praying than to bow down before an idol. Thus is represented the increasing pressures that come to every Christian, and which ultimately will overtake the church itself.

Verse 12 makes it plain that Daniel asked for himself and his fellows the diet of the common people of Babylon. He knew the passage from Prov 23:1-3, "When you sit down to eat with a ruler, observe carefully what is before you; and put a knife to your throat if you are a man given to appetite. Do not desire his delicacies, for they are deceptive food."

To anyone aware of the main causes of current mortality this account is of special interest. Vegetarianism is no new fad. Plato and many

famous ancients practiced it. But this is the first generation in history that has documented evidence on the virtues of such a dietary regime. In Western developed countries the major cause of death is everywhere the same—disease of heart and blood vessels. One in every two men in countries such as England, America, Australia, New Zealand, is doomed to die in this way—and unnecessarily for the most part, according to the experts. The major causes are well known. Apart from heredity, which affects only a minority, the causes are an inadequate diet, consisting chiefly of refined foods and excessive fats; insufficient exercise; tobacco; and extreme tension. The person on a vegetarian diet rarely has a high cholesterol level, and therefore it is a matter of no slight importance that the diet recommended in Scripture is a nonflesh diet (Gen 1:29; Ex 16). To shun "the king's rich food" (v. 15) may have seemed an unnecessary cross, but the heroes of the story apparently knew that "great eaters and great drinkers are rarely great at anything else."⁸

17 As for these four youths, God gave them learning and skill in all letters and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. ¹⁸At the end of the time, when the king had commanded that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. ¹⁹And the king spoke with them, and among them all none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishaël, and Azariah; therefore they stood before the king. ²⁰And in every matter of wisdom and understanding concerning which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters that were in all his kingdom.

Verse 17 prepares us for chapters 7 to 12, where we have recorded some of the dreams and visions of Daniel. It also prepares us for chapters 2, 4, and 5, where we find Daniel in the role of an interpreter.

In verse 18 we have the final examination of the court university with Nebuchadnezzar himself as the examiner. Here were searching "orals" indeed, given by the greatest potentate on earth, a king both demanding and intelligent.

21 And Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus.

No one better than Pusey can be quoted at this point. His observation is as follows:

Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus, are the simple words; but what a volume of tried faithfulness is unrolled by them! Amid all the intrigues, indigenous, at all times, in dynasties of Oriental despotism, where intrigue too rolls round so surely and so suddenly on its author's head; amid all the envy toward a foreign captive in high office as a king's counselor; amid all the trouble, incidental to the insanity of the king or to the murder of two of his successors, in that whole critical period for his people

Daniel continued. We should not have had any statement of his faithfulness, but for the conspiracy against his life under the new Median dynasty which knew not those past years. . . .

Striking is his reserve about himself. A chief statesman in the first Empire of the world, he has not recorded a single voluntary act of his own. Conceive any mere human writer, occupying such a position as Daniel had, a chief adviser of a great monarch, and a great protector doubtless of his people, saying not one word of all the toils, plans, counsels of those seventy years, nothing of the good which he furthered, or the evil which he hindered!¹

¹ Young, p. 267.

² Thomson, p. 9.

³ *Against Apion*, bk. 1, sec. 19.

⁴ For further details see D. J. Wiseman, *Chronicles of the Chaldean Kings*, pp. 20-26; Hayim Tadmor, "Chronicles of the Last Kings of Judah," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 15:227; Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, p. 166.

⁵ See Charles, Driver, etc.

⁶ The names of the four youth are typical of those that pious Jews might bestow on their children, particularly at an age of crisis. Daniel means "God is judge" or "God is my judge." Hananiah means "Jehovah is gracious"; Mishael means either "Who is He that is God?" or "Who belongs to God?"; and Azariah means "Jehovah helps." The substitute names have as their obvious intention the obliterating of the name of Israel's God. While authorities differ on the meaning of the new names, it

seems certain that they were forms commemorating the heathen gods, such as Bel, Marduk, and Nebo.

⁷ We live in the midst of a generation of "marshmallows," a generation often fastidious as to brands of gas, oil, and the like, even the quality of fare given to prize animals, but which considers that the human machine can function on anything that appeals to the eye or taste, regardless of its essential quality. It is interesting also to note that the ancient universities and their modern successors were alike in this, that both taught almost everything except the most essential knowledge—how to live, how to choose. Should not true education give instruction that has bearing on every habit of life? Should not learning be imparted regarding this matter upon which health and happiness so much depend?

⁸ Experts still dispute whether a high cholesterol level on its own induces atherosclerosis. But there is no disputing the fact that those who follow a vegetarian diet consisting chiefly of unrefined foods rarely suffer from this condition.

⁹ Pusey, pp. 88, 89.

Preface to Daniel 2

The prophecy of 2:24-45 has always been regarded as the foundation of the eschatological structure of the book. It has been called not only a bird's-eye view of history but the ABC of Bible prophecy. We will lose much if we do not seek and find here vital keys to all that follows.

Chapter 2 is a miniature of the whole book. It contains both Hebrew and Aramaic, narrative and prophecy. It speaks of the testing of the people of God by the heathen, as well as the providential testing of Gentile genius. The outcome of the test is the elevation of the saints and the defeat of their idolatrous competitors. All the main themes to be enlarged upon later are found here. For example, besides the prophecy regarding the four successive empires, we have the following motifs:

- The providence and sovereignty of God.
- The degeneracy and inadequacy of paganism.
- The idolatrous nature of Israel's oppressors.
- The cruelty of Israel's oppressors, which intensifies in the days of the fourth kingdom.
(These last two emphases are subsequently united in the "abomination of desolation" motif.)
- The ultimate triumph of the divine kingdom.
- Judgment from heaven that destroys the destroyers and elevates oppressed Israel.
- The earth a sacred temple for eternity, as the Messiah tabernacles with His people.

Everlasting righteousness to replace idolatry, oppression, and all kinds of evil.

As in the book viewed as a whole, so here the narrative portion offers a key to the prophetic.

In this chapter the narrative tells of:

1. Nebuchadnezzar's despotism and cruelty, which are typical of the behavior of the four kingdoms.
2. The inability of Chaldeans and other wise men to foretell or control the future. This indicates the helplessness of the Gentile monarchies to implement or withstand the divine plan.
3. The heaven-bestowed wisdom and strength of Daniel and his fellows, which illustrate how the Israel of God will survive the fiery furnace of oppression from the four heathen powers and their offshoots.
4. The elevation of Daniel and his friends over their counterparts and the acknowledgment of the true God by Nebuchadnezzar foreshadow both the judgment, wherein all shall bow to God and acknowledge His righteousness, and the ultimate inheritance of the everlasting kingdom of God by the saints.

The prophetic portion of the chapter indicates the emphases the later prophecies will provide. In this chapter, as in 7, 8, 11, 12, most attention is given to the eschatological climax. The fourth

kingdom and its heavenly successor is the chief focus. Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece receive but scant notice, while the fourth kingdom is depicted as the strongest, the most terrible, and the most destructive of all the antagonists of the Israel of God. This view of the oppressor is succeeded by a compensating emphasis upon the establishment of the kingdom of God.

It is important that we consider in some detail this eschatological section. According to 8:27; 12:4, 9, it is this part of the book that was sealed until "the time of the end." Upon these portions knowledge was to be increased. Any modern commentary on the Book of Daniel should have much more to say on the eschatological section of the book than commentaries written in earlier times.

The eschatological climaxes of the major prophecies of the book include 2:44, 45; 7:13, 14, 26, 27; 8:14; 9:24; 12:1-3. The central passage, 8:14, contains the key of the book: "Then shall the sanctuary be vindicated." On all hands, vindication is acknowledged as the chief theme of Daniel. Even the prophet's name means "God is my vindicator."¹

All that precedes and all that follows 8:14 contribute to its explanation. Scholars have long acknowledged that the later sections of Daniel are explanatory of 8:1-14, but it is also true that chapters 2 and 7 contribute to its meaning. Indeed, if chapter 2 is the introductory prophetic key to the whole of the book, we would expect significant and illuminating symbolism, particularly in its eschatological portions. Interestingly, the last century of research has cast added light on the significance of the "stone" and "mountain" symbols. For most of the Christian age the depth of meaning in these emblems was not fully perceived.

For example, the study of the work of older commentators upon the mountain of 2:45 yields very little indeed apart from the vague assurance that the mountain is a symbol of the kingdom of God. This situation has now changed, and while not all modern commentators have availed themselves of the increase of knowledge, most recent exegetes are able to provide much more information on the significance of the mountain

than their predecessors.

At the turn of the century Morris Jastrow stated:

The sacred edifices of Babylonia were intended as a matter of fact to be imitations of mountains. . . . [This was the] . . . ideal of the Babylonian temple. According to Babylonian notions . . . the earth is pictured as a huge mountain.²

Note other examples:

Jensen has shown that the Babylonians regarded the earth as a huge mountain. In fact, the earth was actually called E-kur, "Mountain House." Later, they began to identify one particular part of the earth, a mountain peak preferably, as the dwelling of the god, so that the temples which were built later were known as "mountain houses." The height of the temple which formed the dwelling-place of the god thus symbolized the mountain which had formed his original home.³

All great civilizations continued the fundamental symbolism of orientation and the total cosmic imagery in their temples. The image of a cosmic mountain also occurs almost everywhere: Mount Meru in India and similar symbolisms in Mesopotamia, Palestine, and elsewhere. The Mesopotamian ziggurat is the most famous example of a temple representing the cosmic mountain. . . . Temples, then, are understood as replicas of this central cosmic mountain, which bears and preserves the universe.⁴

These statements make it clear that to the ancients of the east, "mountains" and "temples" pointed to the same truth—the reign of Heaven. Thus 2:44, 45 and 8:14 are much more closely related than hitherto perceived. The vindication of the sanctuary is identical with the establishment of that eternal kingdom symbolized by the mountain. The parallel between chapters 7 and 8 already indicated this, but now the parallel finds confirmation in chapter 2.

Furthermore, in the East there was a well-known relationship between a foundation stone, a temple, and a mountain. Christ speaks of the stone of Dan 2 as identical with the rejected cornerstone of the sanctuary and thus endorsed what has emerged from recent research.

This rock . . . is not only the foundation of the temple, but as the navel of the earth it is the

foundation of the whole world.[³]

The stone "cut out by no human hand" (2:34) achieves the very ideal aspired to by the Babylonian temples—it becomes a world-mountain.[⁴]

This concept of an animate, expanding stone was well known in the Near East. It arose because the ancients regarded the world as a living body, and referred to its center as the navel. The navel was considered as the point from which nourishment was distributed over the whole earth, and the first part of the earth to be created.[⁷] Predictably, each contending community located the navel in its own center of worship, and so these rival shrines were marked by navel stones or *omphaloi*, which have since been discovered in various places in the Near East.[⁸]

The navel stone is particularly relevant to this study because it was also regarded—especially by the Jews—as the foundation stone of the community temple.[⁹] Hence they spoke of the outcrop of rock in the Holy of Holies[¹⁰] as both the . . . "foundation stone (of heaven and earth)"[¹¹] and the . . . "navel of the earth."[¹²] This same idea of the navel not only related to the foundation stone of the temple, but also attached itself to the sacred mountain.[¹³] The spectacular activities of the stone in Daniel 2 may well be best explained in the light of this common notion; i.e., Nebuchadnezzar's dream depicts the navel stone *par excellence*, growing into a living mountain and filling the whole earth.[¹⁴] Viewed in this light, the conclusion that this stone is also the foundation stone of the temple of Daniel's God seems almost unavoidable.¹⁵

Yet another parallel between chapter 2 and the later visions must be mentioned. As the stone and the mountain conclude the symbolism of chapter 2, and the sanctuary that of chapter 8, so does "the Son of man" in chapter 7. The Hebrews were very familiar with paronomasia in connection with the words stone (*'eben*), son (*ben*), sons (*banim*), and to build (*banah*). Matthew Black says, "The '*eben-ben*' word-play is one of the oldest and best-known in the Old Testament."¹⁶

Dr. Philip Carrington makes the illuminating suggestion that "already in Daniel the Stone conceals the word for 'Son'; it is a cryptogram for Israel, corresponding to the 'Son of Man' at chapter 7."¹⁷ Matthew Black gives several examples from rabbinical sources of this recognized relationship between "stone" and "son,"

and concludes his article with the view that "the christological Stone *testimonia* presuppose an exegetical tradition interpreting Dan. ii. 34, 35; vii. 13 of Israel, as the Son-Son of Man, which may already have been messianically interpreted in pre-Christian Judaism: it supplied the second strand in the Son of God Christology of the New Testament."¹⁸

Thus Dan 2 in its symbolic portrayal of the coming of the kingdom of God is fully as Messianic in its climax as the later vision that concludes with the coming of one like a "son of man." This picture of the kingdom of God applies first to the building of the church temple (Mt 16:18) and ultimately to the sacred temple of a new world wherein God Himself visibly dwells (Rev 21:3). Furthermore, the catastrophic testing of the image by the smiting of the stone is but another way of portraying the judgment of Dan 7:9-13, which is also implicit in the parallel passage of 8:14.

One other aspect of the comprehensive symbolism of Dan 2 should be considered. Is the image itself symbolic in a larger sense than merely comprehending the successive empires? The word used for "image" is the same as that used in the following chapter for the huge idol. So far as chapters 8, 9, 11, 12 are concerned it is the "abomination of desolation" that made the vindicating of the sanctuary necessary. As is well known, *abomination* is the common Old Testament term for *idol*. Scholars such as Cheyne and Beasley-Murray have pointed out the connection between the images of chapters 2 and 3 and their relationship to one of the main themes of the book—"the abomination of desolation."¹⁹

Even the frequent allusion to the work of "trampling" by the idolatrous desolating antichrist could be connected to the image's "feet," which receive the destructive impact of the stone (see 8:10, 13; Mt 24:15; Rev 11:2). It should be kept in mind that in Daniel and later eschatological passages of Scripture the antichrist is the personification and ultimate development of the work of cruelty perpetuated by all the Gentile empires.

To quote Paul Porter once more:

The dream of Daniel 2 not only depicts the fall of the abomination and the restoration of the temple, but also portrays these themes in terms more simple and clear than those found in the later visions. With regard to the abomination, chapter 7 employs the symbol of a little horn (v. 8), chapter 8 speaks of a little horn that grows exceeding great (v. 9), while chapter 11 employs the figure of a king (v. 36). In sharp contrast to these subtle metaphors, Daniel 2 depicts the abomination in plain, literal terms—it is simply an idol, albeit a composite one. The same applies for the theme of the temple and its restoration: whereas chapter 7 speaks of the judgment of the little horn (v. 11, cf. Rev. 13:7), chapter 8 of the cleansing of the sanctuary (v. 14), and chapter 11 of the destruction of the king who profanes the temple (v. 45, cf. v. 31), chapter 2 simply promises a day when the temple's cornerstone will finally be established.

Thus it is seen that the first vision in Daniel not only harmonizes admirably with the later visions but also provides a simple key to their understanding.²⁰

"The dream is certain, and its interpretation sure."

¹ Literally, "God is my judge," but Hebrew judges were thought of as vindicators. See page 25 in chapter "The Theme of Daniel."

² Morris Jastrow, *The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria* (Boston: The Athenium Press, 1898), p. 614.

³ Maurice Farbridge, *Studies in Biblical and Semitic Symbolism* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, Inc., 1970), pp. 180, 181; italics supplied.

⁴ *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. XIII, "Temples" (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967), p. 997; italics supplied.

⁵ Lloyd Gaston, *No Stone on Another* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1970), p. 225.

⁶ *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. XIII, p. 997. Old Testament witness to the concept of a world-mountain occurs in Is 11:9:

"They shall not hurt or destroy
in all my holy mountain;
for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord
as the waters cover the sea."

R. E. Clements (*God and Temple* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965], p. 82) sees in this oracle "a prophecy of future bliss, when the world will be restored to the conditions of paradise." He declares that "Yahweh's holy mountain must refer to the whole land of Palestine, if not to the whole world, which is signified by Mount Zion as a world-mountain."

[7] Thomas Fawcett, *Hebrew Myth and Christian Gospel* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1973), p. 238.

[8] *Ibid.* See also pages 170 and 174 for evidence regarding Babylon as the navel, as well as the following:

SDA BC, Vol. IV, p. 797. "Because Babylon contained the sanctuary of the god Marduk, considered to be the lord of heaven and earth, the chief of all the gods, the ancient Babylonians considered their city the 'navel' of the world" (italics supplied).

G. Widengren, "Israelite-Jewish Religion," *Historia Religionum*, eds. C. Jouco Bleeker, George Widengren (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1969), Vol. I, p. 258. "Not only the temple itself was characterized by a rich symbolism with mythical associations, but also the place of the temple possessed its cosmic significance. It was situated on Mount Sion, which was looked upon as the *tabbūr* (Ezek 28:12), the 'Navel' of the earth, this also an ancient conception in Mesopotamia, for there the holy city was called *rikis mātūti*, 'the umbilical cord of the countries.'"

[9] Gaston, *No Stone on Another*, p. 225.

[10] Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1965) pp. 318, 319.

[11] *Ibid.*; see also Clements, *God and Temple*, p. 62.

[12] R. J. McKelvey, *The New Temple* (Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 203.

[13] Thomas W. Fawcett, *Hebrew Myth and Christian Gospel*, p. 238.

[14] Cf. Jeffery, on 2:35: "The small stone which was quarried from the mountain now becomes itself a great mountain so big that it fills the whole earth. To the writer and his contemporaries the earth was flat and surrounded by the circumambient ocean, and they were familiar with the conception of the world-mountain which was the navel of the earth. The writer here is describing that world-mountain swelling until it alone occupies the earth space, so that all the inhabitants of the earth will have to find their habitation on its slopes. Around it, of course, will still be the ocean, and over it the heavenly vault."

Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol. 6, pp. 507, 508, article "Cornerstone": "Cornerstones symbolized 'seeds' from which buildings would germinate and rise."

Cf. Thomson, on Dan 2:35: "There seems to be a reference here to Isaiah ii.2. 'The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.'"

See also Porteous, p. 50. Fawcett, *Hebrew Myth and Christian Gospel*, pp. 172, 173, explains that OT expressions regarding Zion's exaltation above the hills imply the triumph of Zion over all rival navel mountains. (The fact that Zion was only a little hill was a source of embarrassment to the Jews because the navel mount was held to be the highest point on earth.)

¹⁵ The writer is indebted to Paul Porter's unpublished article "Daniel 2 and the Temple" for this summary.

¹⁰ Matthew Black, "The Christological Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament," *New Testament Studies*, Vol. XVIII (1971-1972), p. 12. For examples of this wordplay see Ex 38:29; Jos 4:6, 7, 8, 20, 21; 1 Ki 18:31; Lam 4:1, 2; Is 54:11-13.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 14.

¹³ G. R. Beasley-Murray, *A Commentary on Mark Thirteen* (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1957), p. 55.

¹⁴ Paul Porter, *op. cit.* (see fn 15), pp. 6, 7.

Commentary on Daniel 2

1 In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; and his spirit was troubled, and his sleep left him.

How could the events of this chapter have occurred during the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign if the training period of the Hebrews lasted three years? Most critical commentators consider this one of the historical errors of the book and thereby indicate their undue haste to discredit it. A little thought makes it obvious that no great writer would fall into such a glaring self-contradiction. In the previous chapter mention had been made both to the year in which Nebuchadnezzar took his captives and of the period of time allotted for their training. To the writer it must

have been apparent that there was no real contradiction in the present statement. The comparatively recent discovery of the accession-year dating method practiced in Babylon has solved the problem. The accession year not being numbered, that which was called the second year of the reign was actually the third.

The king could with a word cause a mighty army to stand girded for war. He could command an innumerable company of servants but could not decree one hour of sleep. The greatest of men are but men. Why should animated mud be proud?

2 Then the king commanded that the magicians, the enchanters, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans be summoned, to tell the king his dreams. So they came in and stood before the king.

The king calls the mighty men of the empire. The brain trust, the intellectuals, those who claimed a relationship with the unseen eternal world, are given the opportunity to display their wisdom before Daniel comes on the scene. A

materialistic explanation of life did not satisfy the best minds of the day; so they pursued divination, magic, exorcism, and astrology as avenues to the supernatural. Modern spiritism has a Babylonian ancestry, as has also the modern tendency to deify

nature. The heavenly bodies were worshiped as well as charted, mingling superstition and science.

The word *Chaldeans* is here used in a restricted sense, though elsewhere in this book it is applied ethnically as well (see 1:4). Critics such as Rowley point out that the term is not known in any other sense than an ethnic one in the century in which the book claims to have been written. This argument

from silence is not impressive when we consider that from over 112 million pay vouchers issued to the soldiers of the Roman legions in the first 300 years of empire, we have recovered only six and a portion of a seventh. Herodotus (1:181) uses the term "Chaldeans" in a professional sense and in such a manner as indicates their prior existence over a long period.¹

³And the king said to them, "I had a dream, and my spirit is troubled to know the dream." ⁴Then the Chaldeans said to the king, "O king, live for ever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation." ⁵The king answered the Chaldeans, "The word from me is sure: if you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you shall be torn limb from limb, and your houses shall be laid in ruins. ⁶But if you show the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts and rewards and great honor. Therefore show me the dream and its interpretation." ⁷They answered a second time, "Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will show its interpretation." ⁸The king answered, "I know with certainty that you are trying to gain time, because you see that the word from me is sure ⁹that if you do not make the dream known to me, there is but one sentence for you. You have agreed to speak lying and corrupt words before me till the times change. Therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can show me its interpretation." ¹⁰The Chaldeans answered the king, "There is not a man on earth who can meet the king's demand; for no great and powerful king has asked such a thing of any magician or enchanter or Chaldean. ¹¹The thing that the king asks is difficult, and none can show it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh."

This passage presents us with a picture of the pride, tyranny, impetuosity, and cruelty which would characterize most of the kings of the empires about to be described. Nebuchadnezzar is a representative man, and every stroke of the picture is significant for understanding not merely the narratives of this book but the prophecies as well.

In verse 4 the Hebrew refers to the transition to the Aramaic language beginning at that point. It is not meant that the group before the king spoke to

him in that language as though he himself had not earlier been using it. Daniel is rather informing us of his intended transition to the common language, used in Nebuchadnezzar's empire, which he will continue to use until the end of chapter 7. That portion of his book placing emphasis upon the rule of the worldly empires is written in Aramaic; while those sections of the book which put most emphasis upon the experience of the people of God are written in the language they used—Hebrew.

In this passage we see the embarrassment of

the brain trust and the growing indignation of their overlord. No doubt some explanation could have been offered if the king had revealed the contents of his dream, but he had either forgotten it or was reserving whatever portions he could remember in order to test his cabinet. The statement in verse 5, "The word from me is sure," gives a different sense from the same verse in the KJV but does not necessarily disqualify the view that Nebuchadnezzar was at a loss to recall all he had seen in the night. One thing is certain: the king sees through

the wise men's fencing for time, and he is determined not to be outwitted.

Verse 11 with its reference to "the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh" is of special interest to Christians who believe in a God who condescended to tabernacle in human flesh. Such grace would never have been anticipated by the heathen. In asserting that "not a man on earth" could meet the demand of the king, they also erred. Daniel was shortly to be manifested as that man.

12 Because of this the king was angry and very furious, and commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be destroyed. ¹³So the decree went forth that the wise men were to be slain, and they sought Daniel and his companions, to slay them. ¹⁴Then Daniel replied with prudence and discretion to Arioch, the captain of the king's guard, who had gone out to slay the wise men of Babylon; ¹⁵he said to Arioch, the king's captain, "Why is the decree of the king so severe?" Then Arioch made the matter known to Daniel. ¹⁶And Daniel went in and besought the king to appoint him a time, that he might show to the king the interpretation.

Scripture says that "anger lodges in the bosom of fools" (Ec 7:9). Apparently no man's position makes him immune to this type of folly. Matthew Henry comments: "It is very common for those that will not be convinced by reason to be provoked and exasperated by it, and to push on with fury what they cannot support with equity."²

Daniel and his fellows here encounter their initial death threat. The rest of the book will constantly ring the changes on the theme of sudden death as a recurring threat for the people of God. The word *deliver*, used so frequently hereafter, has always had an encouraging ring about it for readers in troubled times of church history. Furthermore, the book has special relevance for those of the last generation who will experience the

death test of Rev 13:13-18.

Daniel does not fall into the king's error; he refuses to rant and rave over the weakness and unreasonableness of the request. Wherever he is seen throughout this book it is ever as a pattern for the saints who must through all time contend with "unreasonable and wicked men" (KJV). By prudence and prayer this worshiper of the true God hopes to turn the king's counsel into foolishness and to use the threatened catastrophe as a means of glorifying the King of heaven. The captive had earlier recommended himself to the king (1:19, 20), and thus the time delay the official interpreters could not secure is granted to him. Furthermore, the king recognized his genuineness, inasmuch as Daniel did not request to be told the dream.

17 Then Daniel went to his house and made the matter known to Hananiah, Mishaël, and Azariah, his companions, ¹⁸and told them to seek

mercy of the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. ¹⁹Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

²⁰Daniel said:

“Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever,
to whom belong wisdom and might.

²¹He changes times and seasons;
he removes kings and sets up kings;
he gives wisdom to the wise
and knowledge to those who have understanding;

²²he reveals deep and mysterious things;
he knows what is in the darkness,
and the light dwells with him.

²³To thee, O God of my fathers,
I give thanks and praise,
for thou hast given me wisdom and strength,
and hast now made known to me what we asked of thee,
for thou hast made known to us the king’s matter.”

This prayer meeting did not suffer from vague woolliness of petition. And the specific request received an answer equally specific. Daniel is given the same dream as the king—no mean miracle. The following exclamation of praise indicates the theme of the revelation. It has to do

with the divine control over the kingdoms of this world. We should note that Daniel thanks God for the revelation before he has it demonstrated to him by the king that his own dream indeed matched that of the monarch.

24 Therefore Daniel went in to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon; he went and said thus to him, “Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon; bring me in before the king, and I will show the king the interpretation.”

25 Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste, and said thus to him: “I have found among the exiles from Judah a man who can make known to the king the interpretation.” ²⁶The king said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, “Are you able to make known to me the dream that I have seen and its interpretation?”

Again we see Daniel in an amiable light. He intercedes for the wise men prior to his own admission to Nebuchadnezzar. In contrast we see

the self-centered attitude of Arioch, who claims to have discovered an interpreter as a result of his own diligent searching.

²⁷Daniel answered the king, "No wise men, enchanters, magicians, or astrologers can show to the king the mystery which the king has asked, ²⁸but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. Your dream and the visions of your head as you lay in bed are these: ²⁹To you, O king, as you lay in bed came thoughts of what would be hereafter, and he who reveals mysteries made known to you what is to be. ³⁰But as for me, not because of any wisdom that I have more than all the living has this mystery been revealed to me, but in order that the interpretation may be made known to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your mind."

The seer directs attention immediately not to his own prowess but to the existence and grace of the God of heaven. "There is a God in heaven" is a simple declaration, but how much hangs upon it! Where there is no God, there is no man. Life has meaning only if a divine hand undergirds existence. We live in an age which has endeavored to outlaw God and revelation by stress on the absolute reign of physical law. The materialistic science of the past three centuries, and the philosophy of men such as Kant, have asserted that the laws of nature operate uniformly, inexorably, and independently of any divine lawgiver. Thus the universe is represented as a closed system, unable to reveal to its prisoner any sure knowledge of the supernal realms beyond.

Both scientists and philosophers have forgotten that although a bird may not fly out of its atmosphere, the Creator of bird and atmosphere is free to insert His finger into time and space, and place it lovingly upon the bird. There *is* a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and He has intervened in history to offer man revelation and redemption.

The expression "the latter days" means the closing period of futurity so far as the prophets

were permitted to view it. From the first case in which it is used (Gen 49:1), the expression points to the times of the Messiah. Young quotes Vos as saying that "it is a phrase that belongs to the field of eschatology and contains the note of epochal finality."³ In some respects the whole of the Christian age is "the latter days" (see Heb 1:1, 2; Acts 2:16, 17; 1 Jn 2:18). But this book also uses it of the last part of this dispensation during which both heaven and hell accentuate the momentum whereby this world stumbles to its end. Dan 8:17 points to "the time of the end" as commencing after the 2300 days mentioned in that chapter.

The expression in 2:28 can very well fit both the New Testament age as a whole, when Christ appeared announcing the kingdom of God, and the close of this age, when the kingdom of glory shall be established. Here again, the key lies at the door. The intention of God is to focus our gaze on the last elements of the dream, particularly those concerning "the latter days." We are not meant to waste time counting the towers of Babylon or the number of its temples. As in all the later accounts as well, most space is here devoted to the fourth empire of the future and the everlasting empire of God which will displace it.

31 "You saw, O king, and behold, a great image. This image, mighty and of exceeding brightness, stood before you, and its appearance was frightening. ³²The head of this image was of fine gold, its breast and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, ³³its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. ³⁴As you looked, a stone was cut out by no human hand, and it smote the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces; ³⁵then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, all together were broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth."

Such a dream could not but have impressed Nebuchadnezzar. A glorious colossus dominating all, but then on closer view shown to possess a rather muddy base! In contrast he noticed an obscure, insignificant stone which gathered momentum until it smote the image and toppled it. Even the precious metals became as dust blown away by the wind, while the stone grew in size till it became a mighty mountain filling the whole horizon.

Throughout the ages nations have been represented by human figures. Florus symbolized Roman history, and in our own day all are familiar with England's John Bull, America's Uncle Sam, France's Nicholas Frog. Heaven used in Nebuchadnezzar's time the same type of cartooning to foretell in approximately two hundred words the history of the world. Let us not pass by the marvel too quickly.

An often-told legend relates how Prince Zemi, upon succeeding his father on Persia's throne, sought for a guiding history of the past. Twenty years after the initial assembly of his learned men, a caravan of twelve camels, each bearing five hundred volumes, came to the prince.

Following a speech, the secretary presented the six thousand volumes. Now fully occupied with the duties of government, the king expressed his gratitude. But he added, "I am now middle-aged, and even if I live to be old, I shall not have time to read such a long history. Abridge it!"

Another score of years passed, and three camels came with fifteen hundred volumes for the king. But he declared, "I am now an old man. Abridge it further and with all possible speed!"

After a lapse of ten years, a small elephant carried their abbreviated work, this time merely five hundred volumes.

"We have been exceedingly brief," said the remaining members of the assembly.

"Not yet sufficiently so," replied the king. "My life is almost over. Abridge again!"

When after five more years the secretary returned alone, and on crutches, leading a small ass burdened with one large book, the king was breathing his last, unable to read it.

Yet the prophet, in little more than two hundred words (2:37-44), described the course of history and its meaning more accurately than all the historians of the ages.

36 "This was the dream; now we will tell the king its interpretation. ³⁷You, O king, the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, and the might, and the glory, ³⁸and into whose hand he has given, wherever they dwell, the sons of men, the beasts of the field, and

the birds of the air, making you rule over them all—you are the head of gold. ³⁹After you shall arise another kingdom inferior to you, and yet a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. ⁴⁰And there shall be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron, because iron breaks to pieces and shatters all things, and like iron which crushes, it shall break and crush all these. ⁴¹And as you saw the feet and toes partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom; but some of the firmness of iron shall be in it, just as you saw iron mixed with the miry clay. ⁴²And as the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle. ⁴³As you saw the iron mixed with miry clay, so they will mix with one another in marriage, but they will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay. ⁴⁴And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall its sovereignty be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand for ever; ⁴⁵just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. A great God has made known to the king what shall be hereafter. The dream is certain, and its interpretation sure."

Here is the heart of the chapter. Let us be sure we understand it from the right perspective. It is not the intention of the prophecy to describe all the great powers that would influence the world in all ages. It does not intend to be encyclopedic about history. This map of the future is concerned with the people of God and the revelation made by God initially to the theocratic race whose home was Palestine. The purpose of this message from heaven is to show that all the events between the overturning of the chosen people by Nebuchadnezzar and the ultimate reestablishment of God's kingdom on earth are in the hand of God. He has willed that four great monarchies should preserve a certain amount of order in the earth (Rom 13:1-7), particularly in that part of the world where true religion had its greatest strength. Babylon and its successors all held the land of Palestine as well as adjacent countries in their grip. The fact that the outer boundaries of these four empires varied was of slight consequence, so long as Palestine, the core, was retained. To Palestine the Messiah

would come, and the gospel would initially be proclaimed from that base. After the punishment of the people of Palestine, in the calamity of AD 70, for their rejection of the Messiah, prophecy is no longer concerned with the land or the nation.

The fourth empire included in its boundaries almost all the territories influenced by the Christian gospel for over one and a half millennia. Thus the four empires are those which had a special relation to the people of God and to the history of redemption. The Book of Revelation later adopted the symbolism of the fourth empire to picture all the nations of the world in the last days, but such is not the emphasis in the Book of Daniel.

Confirmation of this approach is found in the fact that from the opening of Daniel to the last chapter of Revelation the only empires mentioned by name are those of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome (see Dan 7:1; 8:20, 21; Lk 2:1; Mt 22:17-21; Jn 11:48; 19:12; Acts 25:10).⁴

Several characteristics of the symbolism offer a guide to our interpretation. First, the emphasis

on deterioration. The image deteriorates in value, weight, unity, and in brittleness, as well as in the respective situations of the parts.

Second, the emphasis on increasing strength. The metals increase in their degree of hardness, thus suggesting a paradox when seen alongside the emphasis on deterioration already mentioned.

Third, the contrast between the metals sought and prized by men and the despised unworked stone. It implies a transition from the efforts of men to the creative work of God.

Fourth, the symbols quite clearly teach truths about the transitory nature of earthly kingdoms, compared with the reign of God, and the certainty of destructive judgments for all powers that oppose the divine will. Judgment is the obvious message of the falling stone, just as the "chaff" also is a known emblem of the results of judgment (Ps 1:4, 5). The only interpretation which can ring true to this symbolism is one that stresses the linear nature of time, rather than the pagan cyclical view, and which stresses also that the desired Utopia can be accomplished only by supernatural intervention involving judgment as the prior requisite to glory.

Fifth, the emblems of the stone and the mountain have well established Messianic implications (see p. 86 of preface to Daniel 2 and p. 99 of commentary).

Sixth, because these symbols parallel at several points the symbolism of chapter 7, whatever interpretation is appropriate for chapter 2 must be consistent with the requirements of the later chapter. Compare for example the use of number four, the specific mention of kingdoms, the employment of "iron" for the fourth part of the image and also for the fourth beast, etc.

Seventh, the use of the head for Babylon implies that the principles of that nation would continue to control succeeding empires even as the head controls the body. The dominant phrase in the opening sentence of the description could more accurately be translated, "one great image" (not "a great image"). The four empires constitute a unity. They represent the fallen world in government as contrasted with the government of heaven. The first national opposition to God recorded in Scripture is from Babel, or Babylon (see Gen 11). The unbelief, disobedience, and

pride there manifested characterize all subsequent nations, particularly the four empires that affected Israel so closely.

The last book of Scripture names the fourth empire as "Babylon" in harmony with the manner in which Daniel pictures Rome's attack on the sanctuary and its host as duplicating the original destruction of the temple centuries earlier by Nebuchadnezzar. Dan 11 similarly uses the term descriptive of Babylon, "the king of the north," for the last opposer of the saints in "the time of the end" (see v. 40). Thus the symbolism implicit in the head of the image assures us that in many respects the whole image is Babylonian. Haskell's comments upon Dan 4:15 illustrate this fact.

When Babylon fell, the principles by which she had controlled others were in turn applied to her. Wherever there is tyranny in government in any nation of the earth today, it is an offshoot of that root which filled the earth, the stump of which was allowed to remain until the end of time. . . .

The mysteries of Greece in a later day were but a repetition of the Babylonian mysteries. . . .

Nations and peoples to-day, unconscious of their origin, are perpetuating Babylonian religious customs. . . .

The influence of Babylon in educational lines was no less marked than her influence in government and religion, and the educational root of the tree was as vigorous as the others. We are in the habit of tracing the educational system of the world to Greece or Egypt; its principles are older than Greece. They belong to Babylon. . . .

The so-called "higher education" of to-day, which exalts the science of the world above the science of salvation; which sends forth students bearing worldly credentials, but not recognized in the books of heaven, students who love display, who are filled with pride, selfishness, and self-esteem—this education is a plant which has sprung from that broad root which supported the tree representing the Babylonian dominion.*

In the statement "You are the head of gold" Nebuchadnezzar is taken for the empire itself. This was entirely natural, as the duration of his reign was more than half that of the supremacy of the empire. Pusey says of Babylon, "It is not only the first empire in time; the conception of the whole idea of world-empire lay in it."⁴ As

already mentioned, Babylon meets us practically at the beginning of Bible history. "The history of Babylon is the story of the great controversy between Christ and Satan, begun in heaven, continued on earth, and which will end only when the stone cut out from the mountain without hands shall fill the whole earth."⁷

Babylon seemed designed as a counterfeit of the paradise of God. It too had a mighty river running through it and was beautified by ornate gardens. The government was an absolute monarchy unto which every knee did bow. The description given by Daniel to the king is reminiscent of the description of the dominion entrusted to man in the beginning (see Gen 1:28).

The two following kingdoms receive brief treatment. This harmonizes with the suggestions that Daniel is chiefly concerned with the two Babylons, the first and last empires. Medo-Persia is described as "inferior," and the question as to the significance of this must be satisfactorily answered. It was not inferior in the size of its dominions or in the length of its existence. Something else must be intended that will explain the consistent emphasis on deterioration one can trace through the entire symbolism. As the shoulders and the body are larger than the head, so the realms of Medo-Persia and Greece extended their borders beyond that occupied by Babylon. Nevertheless, the prophecy insists that as silver is inferior to gold, and copper to silver, so Medo-Persia was inferior to Babylon, and Greece to Medo-Persia.

The inferiority consists of a lesser degree of inner unity. To the Eastern mind the government of Babylon was the nearest to that of heaven. Its ruler was absolute lord in every respect, unhampered by opposing wills. Says Thomson, citing another:

The monarchy as exhibited in Babylon, especially when the monarch was a man of genius, as was Nebuchadnezzar, was likest to the rule of the Almighty over the world: his authority was without limit, direct and absolute over every one subject to his sceptre. The Medo-Persian monarchy had much of the Babylonian absoluteness, but there were, if Herodotus is to be trusted, the peers of the crown, and, above all, there were the satraps, with their

almost independent position in respect to the central power. The third, . . . the Hellenic, had the monarchy limited, not only by numerous compeers, as the king in Antioch was balanced by the kings in Alexandria and Pergamus, not to speak of the monarchs of Parthia, but also by the autonomous cities with the semblance of freedom. The fourth, the Roman, was yet further removed from the old Divine-right monarchy of the Babylonian type. At their first intercourse with the Jews the Romans were Republicans. Their first conquest of Judaea was made by Pompey, the general of the Republic. To the last the emperor, whatever his power, was still theoretically the first magistrate of a republic.⁸

The symbolism itself supports this view of inferiority. Babylon is signified by one head, Medo-Persia by breast and arms, Greece by stomach and thighs, and Rome by legs and feet. In chapters 7 and 8 likewise the symbolism indicates increasing multiplicity and loss of unity.

The supremacy of Medo-Persia is usually traced from 538 BC to 331 BC, over two centuries, and a like period for the empire of Greece extending till 168 BC.

There are many who consider the rule of Greece rather than Babylon as the golden age because of her poets, painters, orators, statesmen and historians. But God represents the rule of Greece as the age of brass, "an age of glare and flare, with but little real merit—and assigns to it only the briefest place in His holy records" (Seiss). On Mars Hill Paul spoke of the days of boasted Greek knowledge and culture as "the times of this ignorance." "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God."⁹

It is worthwhile at this juncture to consider Boutflower's contention regarding the metals:

The gold is peculiarly appropriate to represent the Babylonian Empire of Nebuchadnezzar, even more so than a writer of the Maccabean age would be likely to know; that the silver, so far from representing a merely Median empire, represents far more suitably the Medo-Persian power, more particularly in its later or Persian stage; that the brass is far better fitted to represent the Grecian kingdom than the Persian; and the iron a better representation of the firm, strong, and, if need be, severe rule of Rome, than of the irresistible might of Alexander the Great.¹⁰

Boutflower discusses the lavish use of gold in Babylonian temples:

Accordingly, the walls of the cell of Merodach must be made "to glisten like suns," the hall of his temple must be overlaid with shining gold, lapis-lazuli, and alabaster; and "the chapel of his lordship, which a former king had fabricated in silver," Nebuchadnezzar declares that he overlaid "with bright gold." The roofing of E-kua, the cell of Merodach, is also overlaid with "bright gold"; and the cell of Nebo at Borsippa is treated in the same manner.¹¹

He summarizes by saying, "Magnificence and display form the characteristics of the golden kingdom."¹² The *golden* image spoken of in the following chapter confirms all this.

But with the next empire all this changed. Now "magnificence and outward show were exchanged for treasure, diligently collected by taxation and carefully hoarded up to form the sinews of war when occasion should require."¹³ Thus as a result of this policy 11:2 speaks of Xerxes who was "far richer than all of them." We must keep in mind that in the Semitic languages the word for "silver" also meant "money."

A glance at Josephus where he paraphrases Daniel's words regarding the third kingdom illustrates this theme further. He wrote, "Another king that shall come from the west, armed with brass, shall destroy that government."¹⁴ When Herodotus describes the equipment of the various nationalities in Xerxes' host, in several places he speaks of those who "wore the Grecian armour" or were "equipped in the Grecian fashion."¹⁵ It was the brazen armor that distinguished the warriors of the third world empire. Previously armies were clothed in soft attire. When Ezekiel lists the wares brought by various nations to the markets of Tyre he lists Javan (the Ionian Greeks) as a merchant trading "vessels of brass" (Eze 27:13, KJV). The Hebrew word here translated "vessels" applies to anything made of any material, including bronze armor.¹⁶

Boutflower further reminds us that in passing from the third to the fourth kingdom "we are actually passing from a bronze to an iron age. To

the Roman poets bronze weapons spoke of the olden time."¹⁷

He points out that in the eighth edition of Liddell and Scott's Greek Lexicon the words compounded with the word for brass occupy five columns, while those with the word for iron less than two columns. While iron was used long before the Romans, it was at the time of the burgeoning of the empire that its use became general. Lucretius indicates that the change paralleled the development of Rome.¹⁸ Thus the appropriateness of the description in 7:19 where the beast has both "nails of brass" (KJV) and "teeth of iron."

As the iron is the strongest of the four metals, so the fourth kingdom evidenced its strength by enduring longer than the other three combined. The appropriateness of Boutflower's arguments based on the metals can be demonstrated by recourse to the literature of each period, particularly by the paucity of references to iron in the days of the first empire and its abundant reference in the time of the fourth. Iron is never even mentioned, for example, in the inscriptions of Nebuchadnezzar which have been bountifully preserved. Thus in this marvel of brevity, even the symbolic metals contain a story to be told and illustrated by the later unfolding of history.

The four verses given to the Roman kingdom represent far more extensive treatment than that given its predecessors. While swiftness is the attribute ascribed to Greece in chapters 7 and 8, all the accounts stress the ferocity of the power that followed. Its strength is not that of inner cohesion and unity but rather that of destructiveness. The Roman legions crushed resistance as with an iron heel. The multiplying of verbs—*breaks*, *shatters*, *crushes*—indicates this chief characteristic. The Aramaic term for "break in pieces" means to break with a hammer—another allusion to the similarity between this fourth empire and the first (see Jer 50:23).

There is a strange blending of unlike materials in the lowest extremities of the image. Iron does not naturally combine with clay. What is meant by this symbolism? Usually intermarriage is referred to as the fulfillment of this part of the prophecy. The symbolism appears to indicate something

unseemly, such as the unions of incompatible kinds forbidden in other places of the Old Testament. Keil is probably right in saying:

The figure of mixing by seed is derived from the sowing of the field with mingled seed, and denotes all the means employed by the rulers to combine the different nationalities, among which the *connubium* is only spoken of as the most important and successful means.¹⁹

Even more should be drawn from this figure. The most tried method of peacefully integrating the sections of the former Roman Empire has been that of religious cementing. Union of church and state resulted in the perpetuation of the Roman Empire in the Papacy of the Middle Ages. One writer has expressed the significance of the passage in the comment: "The mingling of churchcraft and statecraft is represented by the iron and the clay."²⁰ Rev 17:12, 13 indicates that the same mingling is to occur again in the modern world. Of old the union led ultimately to strife, and the various elements did "not hold together." So it will be again (see Rev 13:10; 17:16). Thus what we have in 2:43 is the seed of the antichrist plant that flowers balefully in the later chapters.

The stone cut out without hands, the most important symbol, is to this dream what the coming of One "like the Son of man" (7:13, KJV) is in the vision of chapter 7. Both symbols point to the kingdom of God. Christ Himself adopted the terms "the kingdom of heaven," "the kingdom of God," from this passage. Says Wordsworth:

Our Blessed Lord, in adopting this phrase from the Prophet Daniel, gives a tacit approval to the interpretation which had been given to this prophecy, and which was prevalent in the Hebrew Church in His days. "Ask the Jews, what is meant by the stone? they answer as one man, *The Messiah*. Go on to the Image which the Stone smote on the toes, and they are unanimous in saying, *It is the Roman Empire*. Demand further concerning the kingdom of the Mountain, and they agree that it is the *kingdom of the Messiah*, that shall extend itself and subdue all kingdoms, and be everlasting. The people, thus instructed, were prepared to hear from John the Baptist, and from our Blessed Lord, speaking of 'the kingdom of heaven' " (*Ep. Chandler*, i. 100, who

quotes various rabbinical authorities in support of these statements).²¹

Among the Jews there was a well-known play on words in connection with the words "stone" and "son." Thus the link between 2:45 and 7:13 is closer than most have suspected. In one of His parables Christ speaks of the son who is rejected by the wicked husbandmen, and in the same story He speaks of His kingdom as the stone of chapter 2 and the temple cornerstone of Ps 118:22 (note Mt 21:33-44).

When we link this passage with Mt 16:18 it becomes apparent that Christ saw Himself, His kingdom, and His church in the stone symbolism of chapter 2. Several have seen this association. Lohmeyer, for example, writes:

[Context Lk 20:17, 18.] What Daniel says of the rock is here in Luke ascribed also to the corner-stone: it is cut out from its place and breaks in pieces all upon whom it falls. And again this corner-stone is as immovably set in position as the rock that holds up the Temple; none of its assailants—which may even include "the gates of Hades" (Matt XVI:18)—will prevail against it: they will be dashed in pieces.²²

All that has been said on the apotelesmatic principle should be kept in mind as we consider the picture of the kingdom of God in chapter 2. Usually in the Old Testament the coming of Messiah's kingdom is presented as a single event without any hint of the millennia between the first and second advents. As G. E. Ladd has pointed out, however, the prophecies fulfilled at the first advent are consummated at the second. Thus it is appropriate that the Old Testament should fuse the two occasions. We should remember that even in Daniel where the emphasis is upon the eternal kingdom of glory we still have in what seems a single picture that which is actually a double exposure, with the dominating view of the overt and perfect kingdom superimposed on the view of the prior realm of grace. Those who speak of New Testament times in terms of "inaugurated eschatology" are thus true to Scripture's intention.

In chapter 2, "in the days of those kings [kingdoms]," when all four were present in their

absorbed state in Rome, then the divine stone was cut mysteriously out of the eternal mountain.⁴³ The consummation will be reached when catastrophically the stone with one blow shatters all worldly opposition and rears the mountain of God. Possibly we could speak even in terms of a triple exposure, inasmuch as not even the Second Advent immediately ushers in the final divine kingdom on earth. According to Rev 20 a millennial period in heaven for the saints will

intervene. How vast the prophetic canvas painted on the walls of imagination long ago during two Babylonian nights! If we conceive of Babylon as embodying the original rebel kingdom of Babel, the terrain covered extends from the new earth after the Flood to the new earth of the future after the final deluge of fire. Surely here is a feat beyond the skill of mortal man. With the magicians of ancient Egypt we are constrained to say, "Here is the finger of God."

46 Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and did homage to Daniel, and commanded that an offering and incense be offered up to him. 47The king said to Daniel, "Truly, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings, and a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery." 48Then the king gave Daniel high honors and many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon. 49Daniel made request of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the affairs of the province of Babylon; but Daniel remained at the king's court.

Some are repelled at the thought of Daniel's accepting the obeisance of the humbled monarch. But we should see him as the representative of the kingdom he has last mentioned—the kingdom of heaven. Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges the king of heaven in the person of his captive slave in Babylon. In the final picture of the exaltation of the Hebrew worthies, we see an image of the ultimate exaltation of the saints (cf. 7:27).

And what is the chief purpose of prophecies such as this? "For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope." "The scriptures, . . . it is they that bear witness to me." "These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name" (Rom 15:4; Jn 5:39; 20:31).

The purpose of all Scripture is to excite the great motive powers of the soul—faith, hope, and love. Prophecies such as the preceding help us to retain our *faith* in divine providence even when the

circumstances of earth seem about to "crush," "break," and "shatter" us. "There is a God in heaven" who knows and cares. He numbers even the hairs of our heads. Our times are in His hand, and He controls revolutions great and small which affect even the least of His children.

Such prophecies excite *hope*, reminding us that the present existence is but a fleeting moment compared with the life to come in the eternal world. Against hope we are to believe in hope, like Abraham of old, knowing that best of all, God is with us, and final victory is certain. And *love* too should be the result of learning of a God whose dwelling is indeed with flesh. The lowly despised stone should evoke an undying devotion to Him who became despised for our sakes. Kingdoms rise and fall, but now abides these three—faith, hope, and love. He who falls upon the stone has his self-will broken, but from the shattered casket there shines a light which will glow to eternity because lit from heaven's altar flame.

¹See Young, pp. 271-273.

²Matthew Henry's *Commentary on the Whole Bible*, Dan 2:1-13, par. II.

³Young, p. 70.

⁴"One of the most invaluable relics of antiquity which we possess is the *Syntaxis* or *Almagest* of Ptolemy, an astronomer and chronologist who lived at the time of Hadrian's destruction of Jerusalem. This accurate writer records in his canon (in connection with astronomic data verified by modern observations and absolutely certain) the names and dates of fifty-five successive sovereigns whose reigns extended over 907 years; from Nabonassar, the first king of Babylon (747 BC), to Antoninus Pius, the Emperor of Rome, in whose days Ptolemy wrote. He traces thus the succession of the greatest monarchs in the world from before Daniel's time to his own, a period of nine centuries, and presents in one unbroken line imperial rule as it was administered by different dynasties of monarchs from various centres of government, in Asia, Africa, and Europe.

"This Canon of Ptolemy is an unquestioned and unquestionable authority both as to history and chronology. He was not a Jew or a Christian, and had probably no knowledge of the prophecies of Daniel. How did the world's history for those nine centuries present itself to him? He divides it into four successive parts, and enumerates twenty Babylonian kings, ten Persian (terminating with Alexander the Great, eleven in all); twelve Grecian, and ends with twelve Roman emperors, thus bringing the list down to his own time, which was that of the early Roman empire" (H. G. Guinness, *The Divine Programme of the World's History*, pp. 300, 301).

⁵Haskell, pp. 54-56.

⁶Pusey, p. 119.

⁷Haskell, p. 28.

⁸Thomson, p. 70.

⁹Bunch, p. 28.

¹⁰Boutflower, p. 24.

¹¹*Ibid.*, pp. 25, 26.

¹²*Ibid.*

¹³*Ibid.*

¹⁴*Jewish Antiquities*, X. 10. 4.

¹⁵Herodotus, VII. 74, 89-95.

¹⁶See F. Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Biggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), under *keli*.

¹⁷Boutflower, p. 31.

¹⁸*Ibid.*

¹⁹Keil, p. 109.

²⁰Ellen G. White, *SDA BC*, Vol. 4, pp. 1168, 1169.

²¹Wordsworth, 6:8, col. 2, last par.

²²Ernst Lohmeyer, *Lord of the Temple* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1961), p. 46.

²³The text nowhere refers to the toes as kingdoms, though 7:24 would indicate such.

Preface to Daniel 3

The most important thing to notice about the events of this chapter is the New Testament prediction that they are soon to be duplicated on a worldwide scale. This event on the plain of Dura is the first recorded instance of an attempt to produce conformity in idolatrous worship by penal statute. It has been abundantly imitated since, but the most universal and drastic exemplification of religious persecution yet awaits us.

Rev 13:11-18 uses the elements of chapter 3 to portray a universal test over worship that is to climax history. The whole world is to come under the sway of a system of apostasy called Babylon, church and state will unite to enforce idolatrous worship upon all, and death is to be the penalty for nonconformity. On the other hand the following chapter in the Book of Revelation warns that *eternal* death will be the result of compliance (Rev 14:9-11). The commandments of God once more become the touchstone at a time when that idolatrous worship of the creature which the three Hebrews refused to give will characterize the multitudes of earth.

According to Revelation, the outward token of false worship in the last days will signify to the universe that its participator has "the mark of the beast," the character of the first idolater—Satan himself—while those who worship in the way of

the divine law will demonstrate that they have "the seal of God," the name or character of their Redeemer.¹ The deeper meaning of chapter 3, when read in the light of Rev 13, is that all the world is to become a Calvary demonstrating the depths of good and evil in such a thorough way that God can ring the curtain down on time.

It is important, at this stage, to see the relationship between this and kindred chapters to one of the major themes of the book. When Christ spoke of "the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet," He made no idle reference but rather lit upon a central emphasis of the prophecy from Babylon. Jews sometimes called the Book of Daniel "the Abomination of Desolation"² in the same sense that they called Genesis *Bereshtāh* ("In the beginning"). All the visions given to the seer himself climax with a reference to "the abomination of desolation." The Jews believed that the phrase applied to antichrist and saw in the little horns of chapters 7 and 8, the desolater of chapter 9, and the willful king of chapter 11, references to the last and most virulent satanic antagonist of the kingdom of the Messiah.

The Hebrew term for "abomination" was applied regularly to the idols of the heathen, and the word "desolation" implies the destructive oppressions leveled against God's people by the

idolatrous Gentiles. Thus "the abomination of desolation" pointed supremely to an idolatrous and persecuting invader of Israel. The accent on idolatry as being at the heart of all Gentile rule has already been indicated by Nebuchadnezzar's vision of the image. It is here repeated. Scholars have recognized the connection between chapters 2 and 3 and what is later pictured in Daniel's visions. This present chapter is therefore particularly significant in that it didactically presents the theme that is later to be elaborated again and again—flee from idolatrous worship, which is contrary to the commandments of God; flee though the risk be death itself!

While what has been mentioned is the ultimate significance of the record we are about to study, it would be foolish to forget that it applies also to the daily decisions of every professed worshiper of God. With unceasing constancy we are all called upon to decide between giving our allegiance to the idols of popular conformity or to the requirements of our Creator. Though furnaces of trial threaten, the believer will count on the saving presence of the Son of God and seek to obey and

follow Him only. If duty is clear, no question need be asked about consequences. Providence may permit us to be thrown into the furnace, but it will only consume our bonds. Heaven is the presence of God, and it is worth entering a fiery furnace if thereby we meet Christ.

The story of Dura exemplifies those truths to be found in Christian existentialism—to be is to participate, and the quality of existence is revealed by the daring choice of the good despite the threat of annihilation.

¹ Ex 34:5-7: "And the Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. The Lord passed before him, and proclaimed, 'The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children, to the third and fourth generation.' "

² P. Schegg, *Evangelium nach Matthäus*, III:248, cited by van Dodewaard, "Degruwel der verwoesting," *Studio Catholica*, XX (1944), 128.

Commentary on Daniel 3

1 King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, whose height was sixty cubits and its breadth six cubits. He set it up on the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.

This event must have taken place a considerable time after the happenings of the preceding chapter. Some ancient versions suggest it was in Nebuchadnezzar's eighteenth year, whereas some contemporary scholars suggest 594-593 BC. Precise chronological placement is not possible. However, it is clear that the impression earlier made upon the king of the omniscience of Daniel's God faded, and only the disturbing memory of the predicted temporary nature of his kingdom remained. The image plated with gold from head to foot suggests his determination that his empire should endure forever. The golden head of the image seen in his dream is extended despite the decree of the Most High.

Probably the core of this statue was wood.

Israel's golden altar was chiefly of acacia wood and merely overlaid with gold (Ex 39:38; 40:5; 37:25, 26). No doubt the case was similar here. The proportions given in verse 1 indicate that what is here called an image included a tall pedestal. The reference to six would have had deep significance for the Jew. The Oriental mind delighted in symbolism, and the number six ranked high in meaning not only for Israel but for some other ancient peoples such as the Egyptians.

In the Book of Revelation, the warning is given against worshiping the beast and his image. The number of man, when under the control of the Babylonian beast, is declared in Revelation to be 666, a trinity of evil, intimating the thorough apostasy of the last days.

²Then King Nebuchadnezzar sent to assemble the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces to come to the dedication of the image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. ³Then the satraps, the

prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces, were assembled for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

What an ecumenical gathering! An occasion calculated to have a profound psychological effect upon the leaders of the empire. Most humans were and are more moved by the impressions of the senses than by a "still small voice." Those not given to meditation have their convictions framed for them by the masses of their contemporaries and the conditioning processes of popular customs. The methods of dictators have not changed, and those familiar with the propaganda methods that characterized certain military powers prior to World War II cannot fail to recognize here a common pattern.

Several of the terms used here to describe the officials present are Persian in origin, and this has been used as an argument for the late dating of the book. At best it need only testify to Daniel's editing of his words toward the end of a long life in order to bring them up to date. Daniel not only lived through the Persian reorganization of the empire but was prominent in the new government. The LXX is exceedingly loose in its translation of these terms, and Kitchen has commented on the fact as follows:

If the first important Greek translation of Daniel was made some time within c. 100 BC-AD 100, roughly speaking, and the translator could not (or took no trouble to) reproduce the proper meanings of these terms, then one conclusion imposes itself: their meaning was already lost and forgotten (or, at the least, drastically changed) long before he set to work. Now if Daniel (in particular, the Aramaic chapters 2-7) was wholly a product of c. 165 BC, then just a century or so in a continuous tradition is surely embarrassingly inadequate as a sufficient interval for that loss (or change) of meaning to occur, by Near Eastern standards. Therefore, it is desirable on *this* ground to seek the original of such verses (and hence of the narratives of which they are an integral part) much earlier than this date, preferably within memory of the Persian rule—i.e. c. 539 (max) to c. 280 BC (allowing about fifty years' lapse from the fall of Persia to Macedon).¹

For a discussion of the Greek words employed, see footnote 2, page 110, and the introductory section on the dating of Daniel.

⁴And the herald proclaimed aloud, "You are commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, ⁵that when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, you are to fall down and worship the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up; ⁶and whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace." ⁷Therefore, as soon as all the peoples heard the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, all the peoples, nations, and languages fell down and worshiped the golden image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

The close link between worship and the state should here be observed. Their union character-

ized most ancient peoples. Their separation is a very modern concept and was little known even at

the time of the Reformation. Men have been slow to learn that the highest values can never be legislated. The finest motive powers of the soul are faith, hope, and love, and these find their impetus from sources other than force. The word *worship* comes from "worthship," and true religion springs from an awareness of real values, an awareness that cannot be suddenly forced upon the soul, but rather comes with spiritual growth.

As already mentioned, the threat attached to the decree of idolatrous worship casts light on one of the key terms of our book. The stories of chapters 2 and 3 regarding images link with the "abomination of desolation" mentioned repeatedly in the visions, and this story in particular illustrates the "desolating" or persecuting aspect of antichrist as well as his idolatry. To Daniel the

first manifestation of "the abomination of desolation" was the Babylonian power, and one of the emphases of his book is that the people of God are to be threatened by similar powers till the end of time.

This chapter is a key to the prophetic visions that constitute the last half of the book. What the Jews knew as "the abomination of desolation," Christians called "antichrist," and repeatedly in the New Testament the prophecies of Daniel about the former are applied to the latter. The "little horn[s]" of chapters 7 and 8 as well as the willful king of 11:36ff. are typified by the idolatrous persecuting kings named in the historical chapters of this book. Nebuchadnezzar, as well as Belshazzar and Darius, posed for the portrait of antichrist.²

8 Therefore at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and maliciously accused the Jews. ⁹They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, "O king, live for ever! ¹⁰You, O king, have made a decree, that every man who hears the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, shall fall down and worship the golden image; ¹¹and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into a burning fiery furnace. ¹²There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These men, O king, pay no heed to you; they do not serve your gods or worship the golden image which you have set up."

Not patriotism but wounded vanity and jealousy led to the accusation against the Hebrews. The unsanctified heart sees a threat to itself in other people. We usually evaluate men according to the manner in which they promote or challenge our personal kingdom. Racism is no modern phenomenon. We fear and hate that which is different and those who are different. Ignorance and selfishness breed antagonisms between the

peoples of different colors, cultures, flags, or religions.

"There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the affairs of the province of Babylon." There is a veiled antagonism to the king himself in these words. "These men, O king, pay no heed to you" implies that the monarch had no right to expect loyalty from those who were not of his nation.

13 Then Nebuchadnezzar in furious rage commanded that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought. Then they brought these men before

the king. ¹⁴Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image which I have set up? ¹⁵Now if you are ready when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, to fall down and worship the image which I have made, well and good; but if you do not worship, you shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace; and who is the god that will deliver you out of my hands?"

16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. ¹⁷If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. ¹⁸But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image which you have set up."

The three men who would not bend, budge, or burn have never been forgotten by mankind. The human race praises in later generations those whom an earlier generation sought to destroy. Prophets and way-showers are rarely recognized in their day. But who knows even the names of the accusers of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, apart from Nebuchadnezzar, who ultimately surrendered to the God of heaven? The way of conformity is ever the way of mediocrity, and the price of true glory is independence of spirit and loyalty to the Most High.

The courteous but determined refusal of the Hebrews should be carefully observed. They had obeyed "the powers that be" as far as conscience permitted. They journeyed to the plain of Dura. And right at the point where conscience shouted "no further," they rejected the temptation to be arrogant in their nonconformity. As Daniel before them had been courteous in his request to follow his convictions, so these three verbally acknowledge Nebuchadnezzar as king, while committing their ultimate allegiance to the King of kings alone. The entire account illustrates the New Testament dicta: "We must obey God rather than men" and "Render . . . to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (Acts 5:29; Mt 22:21). The three were prepared to be loyal to God whether He appeared to be loyal to them or not. They would not break

His law regardless of whether deliverance would be forthcoming. In other words, life itself was the measure of their fidelity. Only those prepared to die for their convictions can rightly shape their own lives and the lives of others.

It is important to take note of a key word that recurs throughout Daniel, beginning with this chapter.

Nebuchadnezzar had blasphemously asked the question, "Who is the god that will *deliver* you out of my hands?" The courageous men replied that their God whom they served was "able to *deliver*." At the close of the chapter the proud king confesses, "There is no other god who is able to *deliver* in this way." In the later account of the persecution of Daniel we find the same key word (6:14, 16, 20, 27). But it is only when we read the description of the final crisis in Daniel's climactic prophecy that the significance of the stories dawns. The final verses of chapter 11 picture a latter-day onslaught against the church of God, His "holy mountain." Antichrist goes forth with great fury to "utterly destroy many." Next we read:

"At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time; but at that time your people shall be *delivered*, every one whose name shall be found written in the book" (12:1).

The darkest hour of the saints is God's noon. He who attacks them attacks "the apple of His eye." Thus Christ, here called Michael (which means, "Who is like God?"), the prince who stands on guard over His people, rises to put down all oppression and to save His people. He comes down to earth in the midst of a time of trouble such as never was—when the whole earth is as a burning fiery furnace for the faithful few who refuse to conform to apostate worship. He comes down to *deliver* as He delivered the three worthies of old. This is another instance of the interrelatedness of the stories and the visions of Daniel.

Most readers naturally inquire, "Where was Daniel at this time of testing?" The only right answer is, "We don't know." Had the story been the invention that many have suggested, had it originated in the days of the Maccabees to nerve the faithful against Gentile oppression, it is unlikely that the chief hero would have been omitted. Reality transcends fiction, and the very "incompleteness" of this account testifies to its fidelity. Whether Daniel happened to be ill at the time, was absent on court business, or had too vital a position to allow his presence at Dura we shall never know in this life.

19 Then Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury, and the expression of his face was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He ordered the furnace heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated. ²⁰And he ordered certain mighty men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. ²¹Then these men were bound in their mantles, their tunics, their hats, and their other garments, and they were cast into the burning fiery furnace. ²²Because the king's order was strict and the furnace very hot, the flame of the fire slew those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. ²³And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell bound into the burning fiery furnace.

24 Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up in haste. He said to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?" They answered the king, "True, O king." ²⁵He answered, "But I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods."

In the Apocrypha we have a more titillated account thus:

But the angel of the Lord came down into the furnace to be with Azariah and his companions, and drove the fiery flame out of the furnace, and made the midst of the furnace like a moist whistling wind, so that the fire did not touch them at all or hurt or trouble them (Song of the Three Young Men, 26, 27, from the Revised Standard Version Common Bible, copyrighted 1973 and used by permission).

This passage shows the Biblical account in strong relief by way of contrast. The recital of truth is usually more stark than when adorned by the imagination. For the best example in literature consider the accounts of the Crucifixion in the Four Gospels.

In an age where the law of uniformity has been invoked to explain all things, including man, something should be said regarding such miracles as this one. First, all objections to miracles are

based on the law of uniformity which itself is based on observation over an infinitesimal portion of time. Experience can never prove uniformity. On the contrary, uniformity must be assumed before anything at all can be "proved." Second, that the present or future must always be like the past is only an assumption. Third, the Christian view of miracles is not an event contrary to the laws of nature but the feeding into nature of some new factor by the Creator, a factor which after its entrance conforms to all natural laws. Granted the presence of the supernatural facts of reason and morality, lesser evidences of God should not prove a stumbling block.³

As to the probability that a miracle would be wrought on an occasion like this, it may be remarked that a more appropriate occasion for working a miracle could scarcely be conceived. At a time when the true religion was persecuted; at the court of the

most powerful heathen monarch in the world; when the temple at Jerusalem was destroyed, and the fires on the altars had been put out, and the people of God were exiles in a distant land, nothing was more probable than that God would give to his people some manifest tokens of his presence, and some striking confirmation of the truth of his religion.⁴

Because the Chaldeans worshiped fire, this miracle was doubly appropriate.

The reference to "a son of the gods" is the record of another of the theophanies which characterize the Old Testament.⁵ The completeness of the divine preservation reminds us of the words of Christ—"the very hairs of your head are all numbered." The flames consume only their bonds. Here is the Christian philosophy of trial in a nutshell. Note that by delivering us in trouble rather than saving us from trouble, God is most honored and His people most blessed.

26 Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the burning fiery furnace and said, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come forth, and come here!" Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out from the fire. ²⁷And the satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the king's counselors gathered together and saw that the fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men; the hair of their heads was not singed, their mantles were not harmed, and no smell of fire had come upon them. ²⁸Nebuchadnezzar said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants, who trusted in him, and set at nought the king's command, and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God. ²⁹Therefore I make a decree: Any people, nation, or language that speaks anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be torn limb from limb, and their houses laid in ruins; for there is no other god who is able to deliver in this way." ³⁰Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

The king who set out to exalt his own name and kingdom ends by vindicating the name and kingdom of the God of heaven. The glory of God that the three Hebrews could not have preached to

the known world in a lifetime was now promulgated by the heathen monarch to distant peoples through a multitude of official messengers in a matter of days. The last verse images the

ultimate exaltation of all the faithful (7:27) and is another example of the interlocking between the narratives and the prophecies. Says Farrer, "The ultimate vindication and enthronement of the Saints over the whole world is prefigured in the miraculous deliverance of the three children from the furnace, in the king's recognition of their God, and in his promotion of them over the affairs of Babylon."⁶

⁶ K. A. Kitchen, "The Aramaic of Daniel," *Notes on Some Problems in the Book of Daniel* (London: The Tyndale Press, 1965), p. 43.

⁷ For detailed studies regarding the musical instruments in

Nebuchadnezzar's orchestra see the following: Yamauchi, *Greece and Babylon*, pp. 17-24; T. C. Mitchell, R. Joyce, "The Musical Instruments in Nebuchadnezzar's Orchestra," *Notes on Some Problems in the Book of Daniel*, pp. 19-27.

⁸ See C. S. Lewis, *Miracles* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947); Trueblood, *Philosophy and Religion*, pp. 209-218; Bernard Ramm, *Protestant Christian Evidences* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1953), pp. 45-48.

⁹ Albert Barnes, *Notes on the Book of Daniel* (New York: Leavin & Allen, 1866), p. 193.

¹⁰ See Young's detailed comment.

¹¹ Austin Farrer, *A Study in St. Mark* (London: Dacre Press, 1951), p. 253.

Preface to Daniel 4

In some respects Dan 4 is the most remarkable chapter of the Bible. Written as a public testimony by one of the greatest kings of all time, it tells of his pride, humiliation, and ultimate conversion to the King of heaven. It warns of a trap that yawns before many of us—the trap of snatching independence from our Maker—a mistake as fatal as severing a tree's roots from the soil.

Nebuchadnezzar's life prior to the third and fourth chapters of Daniel is one long success story. As the "terrible of the nations" and the "hammer of the whole earth" he had subdued by military might all opposition from surrounding powers. Even the once-mighty Egypt became subject to the northern conqueror. At his feet bowed the representatives of all nations and into his coffers flowed wealth from every quarter. The wit and learning of the times surrounded him, and under his patronage the arts flourished.

Then this supreme monarch received a dream. It shattered his contentment and clamored for interpretation. After the servants of the court had tried and failed, the prophet Daniel gave an interpretation that was in effect a doom knell. The king had seen a towering tree whose branches provided fruit and shade for the earth. Then a Watcher had descended from heaven with the decree that the tree must be hewn down and its fruit

scattered, leaving but the stump of the roots in the earth, girded by a band of iron and brass. Nebuchadnezzar had heard the words: "The sentence is by the decree of the watchers, . . . to the end that the living may know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men" (4:17).

The chief intent of the story is made clear by the threefold repetition of the statement that the Most High rules over and above human government. Both the oppressor and the oppressed are to remember that there is a Heavenly Watcher who has appointed a boundary beyond which evil cannot overflow. Men and nations have a probationary period that, if not valued, terminates in judgment and destruction.

The story warns all men that whoever makes his happiness depend on anything lower than the heavens, less enduring than the stars, and less stable than the Creator Himself invites destruction. Such a one will be pierced through with many sorrows. The acme of such a fatal course is found in all the manifestations of human pride—whether it be pride of talent, appearance, or position. "Before destruction a man's heart is haughty" (Prov 18:12).

A haughty heart is the prophetic prelude of evil and is as surely the sign of destruction as the fall of mercury in the barometer is the sign of rain.

Whenever man dotes on his own greatness there comes an eclipse of his glory. This story tells why it should be so. Pride makes the boaster a beast, as once before it made an angel a devil. The only safe course is that recommended in both the Old and New Testaments: "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." To this end all need to cherish the awareness that there is "a watcher, a holy one" standing by.

Some incidental features of the chapter strongly support its authenticity. The symbolism of a tree cut down was particularly appropriate for this monarch who has been called by Boufflower The Royal Wood-cutter.¹ Nebuchadnezzar personally felled many of the cedars of Lebanon as part of his building program. The reference to "great Babylon which I have built" is also an impressive testimony to the reality of the account. By the time of the Maccabean era the evidence for Nebuchadnezzar's transformation of the capital of his empire was unavailable. Thus R. H. Pfeiffer could write: "We shall presumably never know how our author learned that the new Babylon was the creation of Nebuchadnezzar. . . . as the excavations have proved."² This Harvard scholar has in mind not only the thousands of disinterred bricks bearing the stamp of the king, but the many cuneiform inscriptions now translated which bear witness to the industry of Nebuchadnezzar as an architect and builder. "Nearly every cuneiform document now extant dating from this monarch's reign treats, not of conquest and warfare, like those of his Assyrian predecessors, but of the building and restoration of the walls, temples, and palaces of his beloved city of Babylon."³ Typical of these is one now in the Berlin Museum and quoted in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Vol. 4, p. 799. It reads:

I have made Babylon, the holy city, the glory of the great gods, more prominent than before, and have promoted its rebuilding. I have caused the sanctuaries of gods and goddesses to lighten up like the day. No king among all kings has ever created, no earlier king has ever built, what I have magnificently built for Marduk. I have furthered to the utmost the equipment of Esagila, and the renovation of Babylon more than had ever been done before. All my valuable works, the beautification of the sanctuaries of the great gods,

which I undertook more than my royal ancestors, I wrote in a document and put it down for coming generations. All my deeds, which I have written in this document, shall those read who know [how to read] and remember the glory of the great gods. May the way of my life be long, may I rejoice in offspring; may my offspring rule over the black-headed people into all eternity, and may the mentioning of my name be proclaimed for good at all future times.

As for the strange disease visited on the monarch, Harrison, after a lengthy discussion, summarizes the evidence.

From the foregoing it seems evident that the author of the fourth chapter of Daniel was describing quite accurately an attestable, if rather rare, mental affliction. The Biblical source contains none of the legendary accretions detectable in the accounts of Berossus and Abydenus, and for this and other reasons the present writer regards it as an accredited historical record preserved by one who, because of his nationality, was under no particular obligation to conceal or distort the facts of the case so as to spare the royal family and the court officials any embarrassment. Despite this, however, the narrative presented the clinical facts with discrimination and good taste, and bears all the marks of a genuine contemporary or near-contemporary record.⁴

We would be remiss if we did not allude to the significance of the chapter that transcends the merely personal. One need only to glance through such volumes as *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, by L. E. Froom, to see how widespread has been the recognition that this chapter, like the other narrative chapters, has a broader and deeper meaning than that which applies to a few years in the experience of an ancient despot. "The tree . . . is thou" is no more to be pressed than "Thou art this head of gold" in Dan 2, and obviously means the kingdom even more than the king. It was not Nebuchadnezzar who sheltered all men.⁵

In a book written as carefully as Daniel it is unlikely that symbols from Dan 2 (iron and brass), and from Dan 7 (the beasts and their judgment) are incorporated into the present narrative without some continuity of theme. Modern scholars have recognized this.⁶

Almost a century ago H. G. Guinness

summarized the views of many of his predecessors when he wrote:

Now the vision of the tree is not more clearly symbolic of this remarkable incident in Nebuchadnezzar's life, than *that incident* itself is typical of certain moral and chronological features of the succession of Gentile monarchies.

The leading moral characteristics of all the four great empires, of which Nebuchadnezzar was both head and representative, have been ignorance of God, idolatry, and cruel persecution of the saints. Nebuchadnezzar, prior to this incident, knew not God. He set up a great image, and commanded all men, on pain of death, to fall down and worship it; he cast into the burning fiery furnace the faithful witnesses who refused to obey the idolatrous mandate. How have all his successors, with one consent, followed this example! Idolatry, literal or spiritual, and persecution, pagan or Papal, have marked the whole succession of Gentile monarchies. These episodes in Nebuchadnezzar's life are clearly typical; these features of his character have been stamped indelibly on all his successors; these incidents answer to events on the scale of nations and centuries, with which history makes us familiar.

... The "seven times" which passed over him similarly represents the whole period of moral and spiritual debasement, and consequent idolatry and persecution, in the Gentile kingdoms, from the times of Nebuchadnezzar till the full redemption of mankind.²

As with every chapter of Daniel, this one has special significance for "the time of the end." We read in Rev 18 that the latter-day Babylon, the final church-state confederacy, will boast, "A queen I sit, I am no widow, mourning I shall never see," but as with Nebuchadnezzar, the moment of apparent victory and vaunted pride will be but the prelude to judgment and destruction. "So shall her plagues come in a single day, pestilence and mourning and famine, . . . for mighty is the Lord God who judges her" (Rev 18:7, 8).

Even in this day of universal graft and consummate iniquity there stands amid the shadows "a watcher, a holy one." Right will not always be on the scaffold and wrong upon the throne. The hour even now approaches when the principles of righteousness and truth and all who

honor them will be vindicated before men and angels.

¹ Boufflower, title of chapter 8.

² Robert H. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1941), pp. 758, 759.

³ J. D. Prince, cited by Leupold, p. 198.

⁴ Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, p. 1117. For a discussion of a recently discovered cuneiform tablet that possibly refers to Nebuchadnezzar's mental illness see Siegfried H. Horn, "New Light on Nebuchadnezzar's Madness," *Ministry*, April, 1978, pp. 38-40.

⁵ Thomson, p. 135; Calvin, Vol. 1, pp. 256-258.

⁶ Commenting on Dan 7, for example, Oxford's Austin Farrer says, "The description of the first beast links not with Nebuchadnezzar's first dream, but with his second dream and with its fulfilment. Nebuchadnezzar is seen as a beast plucked of its eagle-wings (in his bestial state, the king's hair had grown like eagle's feathers; now it is cut again). He is raised to stand upright like a man, and a man's heart is put into him. This is to recall to our minds the truth that bestiality characterizes world empire only in so far as it is self-deifying and idolatrous."

"When Nebuchadnezzar learnt that *the heavens do rule*, he became a man and no beast, and the end of the vision in Daniel VII is going to show this very thing. The three beasts which follow the first are unmitigated in their bestiality, and especially the fourth; they show no recognition, that is, of the kingdom of heaven; and so their dominion is taken away, and replaced by that of the king from the sky. The Son of Man is from heaven, the beasts are from the abyss" (*A Study in St. Mark*, p. 257).

Dr. Morna Hooker has written similarly. After saying that the story of the king who became a beast casts light on the imagery of chapter 7, she suggests that it is a profitable line of inquiry to examine those passages in Daniel "where human characteristics are attributed to figures which in other respects are to be classified as 'beasts'" (see *The Son of Man in Mark* [Montreal: McGill University Press, 1967], p. 15). See also H. H. Rowley's comment on the appropriateness of the "beast" symbol for the Gentile kingdoms (*The Faith of Israel* [London: SCM Press Ltd, 1956], p. 194). These statements by well-known modern scholars are not too far removed from older ones of well-known students of prophecy, such as E. B. Elliott.

Without endorsing all that he has written on the topic, we would quote one representative statement: "Did Nebuchadnezzar experience this most extraordinary judgment and recovery simply in his individual *individual* character, or as a *symbolic man* (see my Vol. I, p. 281): i.e. as the mystical representative of the Assyrian empire and Babylon, governed by him?"

"For my own part, considering the extraordinary nature of the judgment—the fact of its being so fully recorded by Daniel—the circumstance of Nebuchadnezzar being addressed on occasion of another prophecy as the representative of his nation ('Thou art the head of gold')—and that of the symbolic tree, when cut down, being bound with a band of brass and iron,

the metals significant of the Greek and Roman Empires which for ages held sway over the prostrate region of Babylon—all these considerations, united with that of the prediction that *Assyria* specifically is to recover in the latter day from its apostasy (see Isa xix. 24, 25), induce me to believe that *Nebuchadnezzar's* insanity and degradation typified that of *his empire* in its apostasy from God" (*Horae Apocalypticæ*, p. 247; see also our comments on verses 13-18 on pages 117, 118).

Modern representatives of the Watchtower Society have travestied whatever truth exists in such statements as above. They interpret "the seven times" on the year-day principle and date its termini as 607 BC and 1914. They contend, contrary to all historical data, that Jerusalem was destroyed in the former year. No authority in the modern world agrees with them. All chronologies place the destruction of Jerusalem as occurring nearly twenty years later than that. More tenable was the position of William Miller and many of his predecessors and associates that if the times were prophetic they extended from the time when the Gentile monarchies began their "beastly" oppression of Israel—approximately 676 BC, when the final deportation of members of the ten tribes took place under Esar-haddon. This event, forty-five years after Shalmaneser's capture of Samaria, finally destroyed the national existence of the ten tribes. Alien colonists were settled in the land, and Samaria ceased to be a royal city. This was in fulfillment of the prophecy recorded in Is 7:8: "Within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people." William Miller and a host of others reckoned the symbolic period from 676 BC to AD 1844, the terminus date of the 2300 days according to their reckoning.

While granting that a case can be made for 1844 as the end of the "seven times" if reckoned prophetically, inasmuch as from that date many numbered with spiritual Babylon have been called back to spiritual sanity by God's final presentation of the everlasting gospel (Rev 14:6; 18:1-4), we would prefer to regard the time reference as a symbol of "the times of the Gentiles" referred to by Christ in Lk 21:24. Thus understood, the "seven times" does indeed apply to more than Nebuchadnezzar's experience and becomes a symbol of the whole era of probationary time during which God permits man to live in the insanity of sin. As many others have shown, Christ's reference is a summary reference to all the symbolic times found in Daniel.

Geldenhuys writes, for example, as follows: "It refers . . . to the whole period during which the Gentile world-powers are in command, until the time comes for the 'saints of the Most High' to possess the kingdom (cf. Dan 7:27)" (Norval Geldenhuys, *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke* [Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951], p. 536). See also Zahn, Schlatter, and Lange. And Caird declares in his commentary on Christ's Olivet sermon: "The whole complex of events was apparently regarded as the fulfillment of the Daniel prophecy that, with the erection of God's throne of judgment, world dominion would pass out of the hands of godless nations into the hands of the Son of man" (George Bradford Caird, *The Gospel of Saint Luke* [Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1951], pp. 228, 229).

* H. G. Guinness, *Light for the Last Days* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1893), p. 42.

Commentary on Daniel 4

1 King Nebuchadnezzar to all peoples, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you! ²It has seemed good to me to show the signs and wonders that the Most High God has wrought toward me.

³How great are his signs,

how mighty his wonders!

His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,

and his dominion is from generation to generation.

In these and later verses an obvious familiarity with Hebrew concepts is expressed. For this reason it is usually asserted by those who believe in the Maccabean dating for the book that the whole story is an invention and could not possibly represent the proclamation of a heathen king. However, as a henotheist, Nebuchadnezzar could well have accepted under Daniel's instruction the belief that the Hebrew God was superior to all others. There is nothing in the chapter that would be impossible for a Gentile under Jewish influence to write. If, as the chapter says, Daniel was Nebuchadnezzar's counselor at the time of his trauma, there is every likelihood that the king would later have called upon him for help in preparing his edict.

Moses Stuart, in his commentary, ridicules the idea that this account of Nebuchadnezzar was a portrayal by a Jew in Maccabean times intended to represent Antiochus Epiphanes. "If the writer of the book of Daniel did indeed mean to hit off Epiphanes in the sketch that he has given us of Nebuchadnezzar, he was one of the most unskillful of all the *likeness-painters* with whom it has been my lot to form an acquaintance."¹

The expression "all the earth" is typical of the hyperbole of ancient prose, but it should be remembered that Babylon did rule over the larger part of the known world, from Elam and Media in the east to Egypt and the Mediterranean in the west.

4 I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at ease in my house and prospering in my palace. ⁵I had a dream which made me afraid; as I lay in bed the fancies and the visions of my head alarmed me. ⁶Therefore I made a decree that all the wise men of Babylon should be brought before me, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream. ⁷Then the magicians, the enchanters, the Chaldeans, and the astrologers came in; and I told them the dream, but they could not make known to me its interpretation. ⁸At last Daniel came in before me—he who was named Belteshazzar after the name of my god, and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods—and I told him the dream, saying, ⁹“O Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in you and that no mystery is difficult for you, here is the dream which I saw; tell me its interpretation.”

It seems strange at first that Nebuchadnezzar should go through a procedure similar to that recorded in connection with his vision of chapter 2. Why did he not call Daniel immediately, remembering his prowess on the last occasion? Probably the wise men of Babylon were an important institution that could not be bypassed without insult. Daniel, now the chief of the group, entered the royal presence last. Undoubtedly, in the providence of God the wisdom of the heathen should be exhausted before a worshiper of the true God met the requirement. Wordsworth suggests:

Probably, from motives of state-policy, Nebuchadnezzar wished to show deference to the national

corporation and college of royal councillors. The wise men were too powerful and formidable to be passed over. If he had slighted them, he would have exposed himself and Daniel to danger. It may ever be supposed that Daniel had advised him to call them first; and this is made more probable by the statement that afterwards Daniel was *not sent for*, but *came* (v. 8).¹

Verses 8, 9, point to the genuineness of the decree, for it is evident that the king is at pains to show that he still numbers himself with the worshipers of the Babylonian gods. He speaks of Daniel as a member of the magicians and one who bears the name of his own god Bel and who is possessed by the spirit of the *gods*.

¹⁰“The visions of my head as I lay in bed were these: I saw, and behold, a tree in the midst of the earth; and its height was great. ¹¹The tree grew and became strong, and its top reached to heaven, and it was visible to the end of the whole earth. ¹²Its leaves were fair and its fruit abundant, and in it was food for all. The beasts of the field found shade under it, and the birds of the air dwelt in its branches, and all flesh was fed from it.”

The LXX reads:

And its appearance was great, and its top approached to the heavens, and its breadth filled to the clouds all things beneath the heaven; and the sun and the moon were, and dwelt in it and enlightened all the earth.

Thomson says:

To those who, like the Babylonian, believed the earth to be a vast plain, it was not inconceivable that a tree should be so high as to be seen over the whole earth. It is a very suitable symbol of a great world-empire.²

Despite the fact that the chapter goes on to interpret by saying, "The tree . . . is you," we must include the continuing explanation that emphasizes the kingdom. "Your greatness has grown and reaches to heaven, and your dominion to the ends of the earth." A tree providing food, shade, and living space for all could not represent merely a single individual. Calvin, after applying the symbol to the king, proceeds to discuss its application to human government. "There is no doubt at all of the whole discourse being metaphorical—nay, properly speaking, it is an allegory. . . . If Daniel had only represented the king under the figure of a tree, it would have been a metaphor; but when he pursues his own train of thought in a continuous tenor, his discourse becomes allegorical."⁴

The words of Leupold are most pertinent:

The broader significance of this chapter is often

lost sight of, especially when it is dissociated from Scripture passages such as Gen 11, Isa 13 and 14, or even Rev 17:5. For when these prophetic passages present the overthrow of the king of Babylon rather than that of the wicked city, the king is considered only as the personification of what the city itself stands for. The pride and the spirit of the world found their classical expression for the first time in the building of the Tower of Babel, but they also met their first significant defeat at that time. From that time onward Babylon appears in the Scriptures as a symbol of the world power in its most significant and truly representative expression. . . . In Daniel . . . the head of the empire is considered less as an individual and more as a representative of the spirit of the world power.⁵

The Book of Revelation refers to verse 30 of this chapter and makes "great Babylon" the basis of its description of spiritual Babylon (see Rev 14:8; 16:19; 17:18; 18:2, 10, 16, 18, 19, 21; 19:3).

13 "I saw in the visions of my head as I lay in bed, and behold, a watcher, a holy one, came down from heaven. ¹⁴He cried aloud and said thus, 'Hew down the tree and cut off its branches, strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit; let the beasts flee from under it and the birds from its branches. ¹⁵But leave the stump of its roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze, amid the tender grass of the field. Let him be wet with the dew of heaven; let his lot be with the beasts in the grass of the earth; ¹⁶let his mind be changed from a man's, and let a beast's mind be given to him; and let seven times pass over him. ¹⁷The sentence is by the decree of the watchers, the decision by the word of the holy ones, to the end that the living may know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men, and gives it to whom he will, and sets over it the lowliest of men.' ¹⁸This dream I, King Nebuchadnezzar, saw. And you, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation, because all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known to me the interpretation, but you are able, for the spirit of the holy gods is in you."

The word for "watcher" has as its meaning "a vigilant one" rather than "a guardian." The term appears in no other chapter of Scripture. But in the Book of Enoch (dated variously from 200 BC to 64

BC) the word occurs about twenty times, and it is taken for granted that readers are just as acquainted with the watcher from Daniel as with the seraphim of Isaiah. Obviously the book was regarded as

very ancient indeed by the readers of 1 Enoch. We should also note that, as in Christ's parables of the tares, angels are regarded as the instruments of providence. Christ's parable of the mustard tree, which grew large enough for the birds to shelter in it, seems to have been taken from this chapter of Daniel.

The stump and the bands apply both to Nebuchadnezzar and his kingdom. His own preservation, despite his humiliation, is clearly foretold, but the continued influence of his kingdom of Babylon is also thereby intimated. The metals of the image's lower part—brass and iron—are here employed once more and this time in association with other symbols of empires—a *tree* (cf. Eze 31; Lk 13:6-9), and one like a *beast* (cf. 7:3f.). Thus it is represented that the kingdom of Babylon after its fall would continue by means of its influence upon other nations. The stump and its roots point to the enduring of Babylonian principles of government, religion, and life, which would send forth numerous shoots until the end of time.

That which characterizes the representatives of Babylon in the Book of Daniel is self-exaltation. The contrast is continually drawn between the humility and self-abnegation of Daniel, the representative of the kingdom of God, and the pride and self-centeredness of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar. This vanity and selfishness of Babylon is its enduring root influencing all later generations. Almost the whole of the historical section of Daniel revolves around Babylon because its principles are typical of spiritual Babylon, the central theme of the prophetic section.

The Bible has often been called a "Tale of Two Cities"—Jerusalem and Babylon. The first points to God's way epitomized by Christ and His gospel. Jerusalem means "foundations of peace." The second city symbolizes the way of the creature without God. Babylon means "confusion." Man's first recorded words after he sinned emphasize the self-centeredness that results from sin: "I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself" (Gen 3:10). Similarly, in the account of the beginnings of Babylon we read: "Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower, . . . and let us make us a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered" (Gen 11:4). The builders intended the tower to reach into heaven. The record warns us that all human devisings in religion can lead only to frustration and confusion. Wherever religion, philosophy, education, or government exalts human effort as self-sufficient, there the roots of Babylon are present. Awareness of the Heavenly Watcher should humble man before he is cut down, and lead him to seek that sufficiency which is in Christ alone.

Nebuchadnezzar dimly sensed his need and his danger as he heard in his dream the "sentence" and "decision" of "the holy ones."

The import of the dream is clearly set forth. The divine purpose in Nebuchadnezzar's experience, and indeed in all the history of world empires, is that "the living may know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men." Despite Israel's captivity, despite the presence of idolatrous and persecuting monarchs on the throne of the world, the true God, His worship, and His people are to be ultimately vindicated by the divine judgments.

19 Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was dismayed for a moment, and his thoughts alarmed him. The king said, "Belteshazzar, let not the dream or the interpretation alarm you." Belteshazzar answered, "My lord, may the dream be for those who hate you and its interpretation for your enemies! ²⁰The tree you saw, which grew and became strong, so that its top reached to heaven, and it was visible to the end of the whole earth; ²¹whose leaves were fair and its fruit abundant, and in which was food for

all; under which beasts of the field found shade, and in whose branches the birds of the air dwelt—²²it is you, O king, who have grown and become strong. Your greatness has grown and reaches to heaven, and your dominion to the ends of the earth. ²³And whereas the king saw a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, 'Hew down the tree and destroy it, but leave the stump of its roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze, in the tender grass of the field; and let him be wet with the dew of heaven; and let his lot be with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him'; ²⁴this is the interpretation, O king: it is a decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king, ²⁵that you shall be driven from among men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field; you shall be made to eat grass like an ox, and you shall be wet with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men, and gives it to whom he will. ²⁶And as it was commanded to leave the stump of the roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be sure for you from the time that you know that Heaven rules. ²⁷Therefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable to you; break off your sins by practicing righteousness, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the oppressed, that there may perhaps be a lengthening of your tranquillity."

Daniel's courtesy and human sympathy are revealed by his reluctance to interpret the dream. But nevertheless, in giving the meaning to the expectant monarch, nothing is skimmed over, and the moral once more is stressed: "till you know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men."

Observe carefully that the fulfillment of this vision is clearly implied to be *conditional*. Daniel admonishes the king to change his ways in order that his tranquillity might be continued rather than interrupted by judgment. This conditional nature of divine announcements of good and evil is clearly stated in Jer 18:7-10 and is of the utmost importance for all who study prophecy. Both the Old and the New Testaments are written on the assumption that had God's people in either dispensation wholeheartedly fulfilled the divine purposes, the kingdom of everlasting righteousness would not have been delayed as now. It is probable that those prophecies, which many now understand in terms of years, may have been fulfilled in days had the conditions been ripe (see

Mk 13:30; 9:1; Mt 10:23; Jn 21:22).

It would be tragic were we so engrossed in the historical significance of this chapter as to miss its practical import. Nebuchadnezzar is by no means the only person to become insane because of refusal to break with sin. And only when his understanding returned and he acknowledged the authority of God did the king become fit for rulership once more. His friends could have cut his hair and clipped his nails, but without understanding he would have remained in the field. Mere outward changes in the life are insufficient. Neither baptism nor the Lord's Supper makes a person fit to live a holy life. Daniel had called for the proud monarch to repent by breaking off his sins by righteousness, and it is striking that the New Testament, which mentions baptism only about six times and the Lord's Supper no more, stresses repentance over seventy times.

The first word recorded of the earliest preacher in the New Testament is *repent* (Mt 3:2). The Master Himself gave the same emphasis as John,

His forerunner. His first word at the opening of His ministry was the same. The launching of the Christian church at Pentecost resulted from heeding the inspired admonition of Peter to "repent" (Acts 2:37-39). And Christ still says to every one of us, "Unless you repent you will . . . perish" (Lk 13:3). Repentance is a change of mind about self, sin, my fellowmen, and God. It means being sorry enough about my selfishness to quit that manner of life. It means a continual crying to

God for forgiveness and strength. "Every one who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved" (Rom 10:13).

There is another reflection worthy of our meditation. Whatever the trial that Providence permits to come upon us, if we are left with the blessing of sanity, all other things should be borne patiently. He who has sanity, health, and a good conscience is richer than all the kings who ever held scepters and lacked these three qualities.

28 All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. ²⁹At the end of twelve months he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, ³⁰and the king said, "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by my mighty power as a royal residence and for the glory of my majesty?" ³¹While the words were still in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, "O King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: The kingdom has departed from you, ³²and you shall be driven from among men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field; and you shall be made to eat grass like an ox; and seven times shall pass over you, until you have learned that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will." ³³Immediately the word was fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar. He was driven from among men, and ate grass like an ox, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair grew as long as eagles' feathers, and his nails were like birds' claws.

The obvious objection to this account has been the silence of secular records regarding any such events. This, upon reflection, is not entirely strange. The madness of monarchs is not something usually shouted from the housetops or stressed in chronicles of the kingdom. Furthermore, the records now extant of the Babylonian Empire are far from complete. Not once, for example, does Nebuchadnezzar's name appear in Herodotus. R. D. Wilson has reminded us that in vain might one search for a tombstone on which it is recorded that the person concerned had been insane for seven years. However, a recently published cuneiform tablet in the British Museum collection could very possibly refer to this illness (see footnote 4 in preface to Daniel 4 for reference to a discussion of this discovery).

The disease referred to is not unknown. Most medical authorities would call it lycanthropy, and all psychiatrists could discourse at length on its nature and symptoms.

Of interest, however, is a much later allusion to this event. According to Eusebius, Abydenis recorded the following incident:

The Chaldeans say that on going up upon his palace he was possessed by some god or other, and cried aloud, "O Babylonians, behold I, Nebuchadnezzar, announce to you beforehand the coming calamity, which my ancestor Bel and queen Beltis are alike powerless to persuade the Fates to avert. A Persian mule (Cyrus) will come, having your own gods as his allies. . . . Would that before he betrayed my citizens, some Charybdis or sea might engulf him and utterly destroy him! or that . . . he might be driven

through the desert, where there is neither city nor track of men, where wild beasts seek their food and birds fly free, a lonely wanderer among the rocks and ravines! and that I, before these things were put into my mind, had met with a happier end!" Having uttered this prophecy he forthwith disappeared and

Evilmaluruchus [Evil-Merodach] his son succeeded him on the throne.⁶

Berosus also significantly hints: "After beginning the wall of which I have spoken, Nabuchodonosor fell sick and died, after a reign of forty-three years."⁷

34 At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him who lives for ever;

**for his dominion is an everlasting dominion,
and his kingdom endures from generation to generation;**

**³⁵all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing;
and he does according to his will in the host of heaven
and among the inhabitants of the earth;
and none can stay his hand**

or say to him, "What doest thou?"

³⁶At the same time my reason returned to me; and for the glory of my kingdom, my majesty and splendor returned to me. My counselors and my lords sought me, and I was established in my kingdom, and still more greatness was added to me. ³⁷Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven; for all his works are right and his ways are just; and those who walk in pride he is able to abase.

The theme of restoration and elevation that marks so many of the chapters of Daniel is present here also. We should compare the use of "at the end of the days" in verse 34 with 12:13 and the restoration of that chapter.

Matthew Henry's parting shot on this chapter is admirable. "If so great a *blasphemer and persecutor* did find mercy, he was not the last. And, if our charity may reach so far as to hope he did, we must admire free grace, by which he lost his wits for a while, that he might save his soul for ever."⁸

⁶ Thomson, p. 135.

⁷ Calvin, Vol. I, p. 257.

⁸ Leupold, p. 166.

⁹ *Proep. Evang.*, p. 41, cited by Boutflower, p. 65.

¹⁰ *Contra Apion*, 1:20.

¹¹ *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, last par. of ch. 4. Some mention should be made to a Qumran Cave IV document, "Prayer of Nabonidus." Its account is similar to Dan 4 in many ways and thus liberal scholars have credited the Qumran translation as being the original source of Daniel's story. It is more likely, however, that the reverse is the case. See Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, pp. 1117-1121, and David N. Freedman, "The Prayer of Nabonidus," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, No. 145, pp. 31, 32.

¹ Cited by Young, p. 98. See also Thomson, p. 133.

² Wordsworth, Vol. VI, p. 15.

Preface to Daniel 5

The last of the historical chapters of Daniel dealing with Babylon fittingly describes the last hours of that empire. For many years the chapter's historicity was denied because the name Belshazzar was unknown to cuneiform documents. Records showed Nabonidus to be the ruler of the Neo-Babylonian Empire before its capitulation to Cyrus in 539 B.C. Today, however, even the most critical of commentaries take Belshazzar in their stride. James Barr, for example, writes:

Belshazzar was son of Nabonidus but was associated with him in the administration, and represented the monarch especially after his departure to Tema in North Arabia, where he stayed for many of the later years of his reign. . . . Babylon fell to the Persian troops under a general Gobryas; Nabonidus was not in the city at the time; it is uncertain whether Belshazzar was, but Xenophon tells of the slaying of "the King" during the entry.¹

In his well-known monograph on the relationship between Dan 5 and secular history, *Nabonidus and Belshazzar*, Raymond P. Dougherty of Yale University concludes:

Of all non-Babylonian records dealing with the situation at the close of the Neo-Babylonian empire the fifth chapter of Daniel ranks next to cuneiform

literature in accuracy so far as outstanding events are concerned. The Scriptural account may be interpreted as excelling because it employs the name Belshazzar, because it attributes royal power to Belshazzar, and because it recognizes that a dual relationship existed in the kingdom. Babylonian cuneiform documents of the sixth century B.C. furnish clear-cut evidence of the correctness of these three basic historical nuclei contained in the Biblical narrative dealing with the fall of Babylon.

Cuneiform texts written under Persian influence in the sixth century B.C. have not preserved the name Belshazzar, but his role as a crown prince entrusted with royal power during Nabonidus' stay in Arabia is depicted convincingly.

Two famous Greek historians of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. do not mention Belshazzar by name and hint only vaguely at the actual political situation which existed in the time of Nabonidus. Annals in the Greek language ranging from about the beginning of the third century B.C. to the first century B.C. are absolutely silent concerning Belshazzar and the prominence which he had during the last reign of the Neo-Babylonian empire. The total information found in all available chronologically-fixed documents later than the cuneiform texts of the sixth century B.C. and prior to the writings of Josephus of the first century A.D. could not have provided the necessary material for the historical framework of the fifth chapter of Daniel.²

When the battle over the existence of Belshazzar was successfully won, the next issue was regarding his "kingship" and his relationship to Nebuchadnezzar. In cuneiform inscriptions Belshazzar is never called "king." However, the evidence showed that Belshazzar was certainly entrusted with the rule of Babylon during his father's absence and what other term than "king" could Daniel have used for a man in that position?³ Furthermore, the Aramaic word for "king" had several connotations and did not necessarily mean an absolute monarch.⁴

As for whether Belshazzar was the son of Nebuchadnezzar as verse 11 states, it is a commonplace knowledge among Bible students that the term is used loosely throughout Scripture to mean a descendant. Christ as the "Son of David" is the best example, but see Mt 1 (RSV) for a group of instances of the Eastern usage of such expressions as "son" and "father." In non-Biblical literature of the time we find the word *son* was used in at least eight different ways.

So much for the chief critical problems of the chapter. What of its significance? The New Testament alludes to this narrative in connection with the last things. "When people say, 'There is peace and security' then sudden destruction will come upon them as travail comes upon a woman with child, and there will be no escape" (1 Th 5:3). This passage is drawing from such Old Testament references as Is 13:8; 47:10, 11—all of which have reference to the carnal peace and security experienced by Babylon at the time of its fall.

Rev 18:7, 8, describing the end of the age, also draws from Isaiah's prophecies regarding Babylon's fall (cf. Is 47:8, 9). *It is not coincidence that the New Testament uses the events of Dan 5 to portray the fall of the world.* The two Biblical apocalypses, Daniel and Revelation, view Babylon as a system lasting through all time. Rev 13:1, 2, in describing the beast power that is to make the final war on Christ and His church, draws upon the symbolism belonging to ancient Babylon, and later chapters develop the comparison in detail.⁵

Christ (Mt 24:37-39), Paul (1 Th 5:1-3), and John (Rev 18:7) each view the world as reflecting the spirit of Belshazzar's feast as its probation is

about to close and as divine judgment is about to fall. We should study the story carefully with this in mind. Chapter 5 is complemented by the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah regarding the coming of Cyrus and the deliverance of Israel (Is 41-47; Jer 50, 51). Revelation states that before the deliverance of God's church, spiritual Israel, there will be a drying up of the symbolic Euphrates, the "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues" who support the whore (Rev 16:12; 17:15). This is what happened while Belshazzar and his lords feasted. The great river, the source of commercial wealth to Babylon, was diverted from its course by Cyrus, and invading soldiers used the riverbed as a way into the capital to overthrow its drunken protectors (Jer 50:38).

Cyrus is used in Is 44:25 as a type of Jesus the Messiah. As Cyrus, whose name means "the sun," and who is called by God "my shepherd" and "anointed [one]," came from the east with fellow kings to overthrow Babylon and deliver Israel, so at the end of time, Christ, the Sun of righteousness, the Good Shepherd who cares for His flock, will come from the eastern heavens to deliver His threatened people. As Israel of old left Babylon to return to a new Jerusalem, so it will be again (Rev 18:1-4).

What precipitated the judgment of heaven upon Belshazzar and Babylon? The blasphemous usurpation of holy things. When they profanely used the sacred vessels of the sanctuary, probation ran out for Babylon. Scripture foretells that when apostate religion links hands with the secular realm and uses civil power to enforce its dogmas, then the day of salvation will close. According to Rev 13:17, the antichrist confederation will enforce its mark upon all who will submit, and that mark is a counterfeit of Heaven's seal. The law of God will be cunningly changed, and what God has marked out as sacred will be trampled underfoot. At such an hour spiritual Babylon will anticipate a time of "peace and safety," but instead, "sudden destruction [as in the night of Belshazzar's feast] cometh upon them, . . . and they shall not escape" (1 Th 5:3). The international "time of trouble" foretold in Dan 12:1 is the antitype of the trouble that came to literal Babylon in its night of profane revelry.

There was a last night in the history of Belshazzar. There is a last night to everything and everyone on earth. A last feast, a last fight, a last dance, a last movie, a last cigar, a last drink, a last cigarette, a last oath, a last supper, a last night. . . .

The Belshazzars of today may make their great feasts, drink their expensive wines, profane holy things and mock holy men, but there is a last night for them all.⁴

But we have not yet asked the main question: What bearing does this story concerning Belshazzar in 539 BC have for the believer today? There are some very obvious warnings. How prone man is to forget! Belshazzar had the fate of his grandfather as a memory, yet he trod over the same ground and found it to be quicksand. Sin is so deceptive that we are impervious to cartloads of admonition and good advice. We must needs be bitten before we believe the warnings regarding "that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan." Drunkenness and idolatry, feasting and falling, keep close company.

It is not by idle chance that the beginning of this book stresses the need for self-control in eating and drinking, repeats the warning here in the middle, and touches on the same need yet again before the book closes (10:3ff.). The man or woman who fails to rule appetite can never be patient and forbearing. As suggested earlier, "Great eaters and great drinkers are rarely great at anything else." For them the completeness of Christian character is impossible. If ever an age needed this truth, it is the present time.

Time magazine bills on its front cover⁷ this dictum: "Eating May Not Be Good for You," and certainly for many people this is true. Before the first advent of Christ, John the Baptist was

characterized by simplicity of habits and abstemiousness (Mt 3:4). Who shall teach the same before the second coming of our Lord? Where is there a people who demonstrate that godliness has to do with the whole man and the whole of life? "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor 10:31, KJV). In a figurative sense, every one of us is a king and in possession of sacred vessels. Paul affirmed that the body is the temple of God (1 Cor 6:19, 20), and God will destroy whoever defiles that temple as surely as He judged Belshazzar when he defiled the vessels of Jerusalem's temple.

Acceptance of the Christian faith means henceforth a sense of stewardship whereby we acknowledge that all we have and are and might be are the Lord's. It means a daily awareness that God either matters tremendously or not at all. He is Lord of all or not Lord at all. Each thought, word, and deed should confess that Christ is all and that we have been bought with a price. Thus the "God in whose hand is . . . [our] breath" is to be glorified.

⁴ Barr, p. 596.

⁵ Raymond Philip Dougherty, *Nabonidus and Belshazzar* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1929), pp. 199, 200.

⁶ See Leupold, p. 211.

⁷ See Young, p. 118.

⁸ For a detailed parallel illustration of this point see SDA BC, Vol. 7, pp. 867-869.

⁹ W. G. Heulop, *Diamonds From Daniel* (Olivet, Illinois: Nazarene Publishing House, 1937), p. 93.

¹⁰ December 18, 1972.

Commentary on Daniel 5

1 King Belshazzar made a great feast for a thousand of his lords, and drank wine in front of the thousand.

2 Belshazzar, when he tasted the wine, commanded that the vessels of gold and of silver which Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the temple in Jerusalem be brought, that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them. ³Then they brought in the golden and silver vessels which had been taken out of the temple, the house of God in Jerusalem; and the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines drank from them. ⁴They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.

The Nabonidus Chronicle reports that the troops of Cyrus entered Babylon without fighting. Xenophon speaks of the deflecting of a stream that coursed through the capital at a time when the Babylonians were observing a night festival. Apparently the feasting king and his nobles believed themselves secure, protected as they were by impregnable walls and a canal system that could, if necessary, flood the surrounding country and preserve the city.

The "thousand" is no exaggeration. Babylonian and Persian courts were huge establishments. Historian Ktesias tells us that the Persian ruler provided for 15,000 daily. A stele

discovered at Nimrud refers to a festival where King Ashurnasirpal II feasted 69,574 people over a ten-day period. The Greeks tell of the wedding feast of Alexander the Great with its 10,000 guests.

This account is all Scripture has to say about Belshazzar. His only record concerns an insolent, blasphemous carousal. Scripture elsewhere speaks of a king who "departed with no one's regret" (2 Chr 21:20). One cannot but meditate upon the folly of those who think that they alone of all things composing nature's living system can exist without contributing to the benefit of others. Christ called a certain rich man a fool, not because

of any outrageous deed, but because he took for granted that he was his own and lived accordingly.

It should be noted that it was "when the wine was beginning to taste good"¹ that Belshazzar's crowning folly was enacted. It remains an unsolved mystery why man should so willingly cripple that which alone distinguishes him from the beast. Governments penalize those who "drink and drive," but are not all drinkers "driving" through life whether motorists or not? Is the damage done by a drunkard in his home that much less fatal than what is done at the wheel of a vehicle? Many are psychologically crippled for life because of the early terrors of an inebriate's home.

The connection between the act of blasphemy with the temple vessels and the message of judgment should be carefully observed. We have here an intensification of the theme of 1:1, 2, where the temple vessels are first mentioned. The visions will enlarge the same motif of blasphemous pollution of the holy things. What is done to the sanctuary is reckoned by God as done to Himself. The Jewish temple, and the "glorious holy mountain" on which it rested, are used throughout Scripture as a symbol of the church,

and in passages such as 8:10-13 we have prophetically pictured the same theme as historically referred to in chapters 1 and 5.

Chapter 4 has taught the lesson that when powers antagonistic to God and His people exalt themselves in pride, Divine Providence can bring them low. Insolence and blasphemy are but a step from pride, and here in chapter 5 the lessons of the preceding chapter are continued—the Watcher and the Holy One witness every blasphemy and close the probation of all who pass the line of possible repentance. Thus the people of God are encouraged not to fear their adversaries, though the latter go from bad to worse in spiritual degeneracy.

The six classes of false gods mentioned would remind every Jewish reader that in the sight of heaven Babylon was an abomination because of its idolatry, and therefore a prospective desolator of all who worshiped the one true God. The term "abomination of desolation," so characteristic of the second half of the book, is amply illustrated in the first half by the accounts of historical "antichrists" characterized by idolatry and persecution.

5 Immediately the fingers of a man's hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace, opposite the lampstand; and the king saw the hand as it wrote. ⁶Then the king's color changed, and his thoughts alarmed him; his limbs gave way and his knees knocked together. ⁷The king cried aloud to bring in the enchanters, the Chaldeans, and the astrologers. The king said to the wise men of Babylon, "Whoever reads this writing, and shows me its interpretation, shall be clothed with purple, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom." ⁸Then all the king's wise men came in, but they could not read the writing or make known to the king the interpretation. ⁹Then King Belshazzar was greatly alarmed, and his color changed; and his lords were perplexed.

It is possible that the lampstand here referred to was one taken from Solomon's temple, which had ten lampstands (1 Ki 7:49). If so, the message of judgment was inscribed at a section of the

banqueting chamber appropriate in more than one way. Thereby light was shed not only on the message of judgment but also on the reason for it.

Matthew Henry quaintly comments on this

passage: "See how he [Belshazzar] affronts God, and God affrights him." The king should have been fasting rather than feasting, praying to God rather than provoking Him. As a result, the same hand that wrote on tables a law forbidding idolatry now writes on a wall the certainty of doom for idolaters. No doubt the shock helped to sober the revelers. Significantly, none present concluded that the inscription was good news promising deliverance from the invading armies. Conscience immediately became active, and "the news" was

interpreted as bad news, even before its meaning was provided.

This is the third account of the inadequacy of human wisdom. The king's wise men fail again. Christ taught the same lesson when he said to Peter, regarding the fisherman's confession of faith in Him as the Messiah, "Flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven" (Mt 16:17). We do well to take the hint as we try to interpret Heaven's cryptic message embodied in the twelve chapters of Daniel.

10 The queen, because of the words of the king and his lords, came into the banqueting hall; and the queen said, "O king, live for ever! Let not your thoughts alarm you or your color change. ¹¹There is in your kingdom a man in whom is the spirit of the holy gods. In the days of your father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, were found in him, and King Nebuchadnezzar, your father, made him chief of the magicians, enchanters, Chaldeans, and astrologers, ¹²because an excellent spirit, knowledge, and understanding to interpret dreams, explain riddles, and solve problems were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar. Now let Daniel be called, and he will show the interpretation."

13 Then Daniel was brought in before the king. The king said to Daniel, "You are that Daniel, one of the exiles of Judah, whom the king my father brought from Judah. ¹⁴I have heard of you that the spirit of the holy gods is in you, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in you. ¹⁵Now the wise men, the enchanters, have been brought in before me to read this writing and make known to me its interpretation; but they could not show the interpretation of the matter. ¹⁶But I have heard that you can give interpretations and solve problems. Now if you can read the writing and make known to me its interpretation, you shall be clothed with purple, and have a chain of gold about your neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom."

The queen is probably Nebuchadnezzar's widow. Daniel is no stranger to her, and her description of him purposely elevates him above the other wise men. Probably the talented Jew had seemed too much of a "square" for young Belshazzar to have near at hand. But in crises

"squares" can be useful; so Daniel is brought.

Picture the meeting of the aged seer (beyond eighty years old), and the elegant young king (about thirty-six). One was perfectly at home in spirit, though an exile; the other was agitated in spirit, though a king. One feared nothing from the

unknown; the other feared all that was unknown. One could read aright both the meaning of past years and the words on the wall concerning the present; the other had ignored the past and

consequently was ignorant also about the present and the future. One was offered gold and high office; the other lost his office and turned to clay.

17 Then Daniel answered before the king, "Let your gifts be for yourself, and give your rewards to another; nevertheless I will read the writing to the king and make known to him the interpretation. ¹⁸O king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar your father kingship and greatness and glory and majesty; ¹⁹and because of the greatness that he gave him, all peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him; whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he raised up, and whom he would he put down. ²⁰But when his heart was lifted up and his spirit was hardened so that he dealt proudly, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and his glory was taken from him; ²¹he was driven from among men, and his mind was made like that of a beast, and his dwelling was with the wild asses; he was fed grass like an ox; and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, until he knew that the Most High God rules the kingdom of men, and sets over it whom he will. ²²And you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, though you knew all this, ²³but you have lifted up yourself against the Lord of heaven; and the vessels of his house have been brought in before you, and you and your lords, your wives, and your concubines have drunk wine from them; and you have praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood, and stone, which do not see or hear or know, but the God in whose hand is your breath, and whose are all your ways, you have not honored."

The dignified prophet makes no haste. He tells the king to keep his promised rewards, and then reviews the past, particularly the fate of Nebuchadnezzar when pride had brought the judgment of the holy Watchers and that king had

lost his sanity and his throne. Then comes the punch line: "And you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, though you knew all this. . . . The God in whose hand is your breath, and whose are all your ways, you have not honored."

24 "Then from his presence the hand was sent, and this writing was inscribed. ²⁵And this is the writing that was inscribed: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, and PARSIN. ²⁶This is the interpretation of the matter: MENE, God has numbered the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end;

**²⁷TEKEL, you have been weighed in the balances and found wanting;
²⁸PERES, your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians."**

Many are the theories as to why the writing could not be read. Were the letters in the form of an anagram, written vertically rather than horizontally in an archaic script? Or was it that they could be read though not understood? Some scholars refer to the possibility that the words were those of a familiar price tag and that it listed certain money values thus: "Counted: a mina, a shekel, and divisions of a shekel."² Each of the nouns is then taken as a verb and double meanings invoked. MENE—comes from the root "to count"; TEKEL—to weigh; PERES—to divide.³ PERES is related not only to the Aramaic verb for "divided" but also to the Aramaic noun for Persians.

The first word here signified "a counting in order to limit." Babylon's days had run out! The

second implies that in the weighing in the divine balances Belshazzar and company had been found lightweights indeed. The third word to Daniel meant that the kingdom was to be broken and then given by Providence to the Medes and Persians. The sequence—"Medes" first and "Persians" following—sets forth the historical order wherein the Medes originally were predominant but later and lastingly the Persians. The dual *Parsin* stresses the fact that the Persians were the more significant race.

The same lesson is taught in this interpretation as in the previous instances—only a man in touch with Heaven can discern the real meaning of the known facts. Awareness of the words of Scripture and awareness of their comprehensive meaning are two separate things.

29 Then Belshazzar commanded, and Daniel was clothed with purple, a chain of gold was put about his neck, and proclamation was made concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

30 That very night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was slain.

Once more we have the theme of the exaltation of God's people as personified by the prophet. The expression "the third ruler" is not to be understood literally but as an idiom for a superior officer. Daniel's acceptance of the honors was not because of any value he placed upon them, as his

original words to the king show. Rather it suggests an acknowledgment of the supremacy of the only true God—Daniel's God. Another that night, garbed in even more splendid apparel—"a robe of purple around a form of clay"—also testified, albeit mutely.

³¹And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.

See introductory section, "The Date of Daniel," for a discussion of the identity of Darius.⁴

³ *Parsin* is the dual.

⁴ For the account of Cyrus himself on the taking of Babylon, see J. B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969), pp. 312-316. And for modern estimates of the size of Babylon, see "Babylon" in *The New Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids: Wm. E. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1962). Herodotus exaggerated the size of the city but perhaps not its splendor. There were at least fifty-three temples in the metropolis; over ten thousand inscribed texts recovered from the site provide much of our information.

² Leupold, p. 214

³ See Barr, Heaton. Some prefer the last word to be translated as the division of a mina, i.e., a half-mina. See the discussion in Charles.

Preface to Daniel 6

This is the last of the purely historical chapters. Its theme remains the same—the sovereignty of the Invisible King, His power to deliver and destroy. It is worthwhile reviewing the pattern of chapters 2 to 7, which follow the prologue of chapter 1. The chapters consist of three pairs: 2 and 7, 3 and 6, 4 and 5. Of the last two pairs, the former shows God's omnipresence and His readiness to save in their extremity those faithful to Him, while the latter pair illustrates how the same omnipresent God can humble the insolence of rebel rulers. There is an interesting progression in these chapters also. While in chapter 3 Nebuchadnezzar demands homage for his image, in chapter 4 he advances in self-glorification; and in the next chapter we see the open opposition of defiant blasphemy. Similarly, there is an observable progression in the testing of believers. The three Hebrews refused positive homage to the idolatrous image, but Daniel goes further, refusing even the negative homage of omitting his worship of the true God.

The prophetic chapters (2 and 7) show the same issues on a worldwide scale, intensifying the effect of the individual case histories.

The depth of trial recorded in this chapter is

revealed when we consider the age of the prophet. Here we have a man in his eighties meeting the greatest test of his career—a test precipitated because of his own sterling virtues and his refusal to conform to worldly traditions. We cannot but be impressed by the tribute of Daniel's enemies: "We shall not find any ground for complaint against this Daniel unless we find it in connection with the law of his God." Scripture gives its own summary: "He was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him." No error or fault! How many are there even in the Book of books like that? They can be counted on one hand without using the thumb.

No wonder some have suggested that here we have the gleamings of one greater than Daniel. Bishop Wordsworth has beautifully expressed the parallels between this prophet who conquered by suffering and the Prophet greater than he.

He was a Prince of the House of Judah, and was a man of suffering and sorrow; he was an exile and a captive; he is called "Son of man." He is also called a man greatly beloved, a *man of desire*; or (as it is literally) "a man of desires," or even, in the abstract, "desires," and thus may seem to be a type of Him who is "the desire of all nations," the "dearly beloved Son," in whom the Father is well pleased.

Daniel was like Christ in wisdom. . . . He was like Christ in dutiful loyalty to rulers who scorned

and persecuted him. He was like Him in intercession.

He was also like Christ in the manner of his suffering, and in its consequences. He was condemned on account of his reverence and obedience to God. The princes of Persia raged against him, as the rulers of Judah raged against Christ.

Daniel was cast into the pit or den of lions, so Christ is said by the psalmist to be in the pit, and His soul among lions. The prison house of Daniel was closed with a stone, sealed with the king's seal and the seals of his lords; a stone was on the mouth of the grave of Christ, and it was sealed with the seal of the chief priests. Daniel arose from that pit to honour and glory; so did Christ from the grave. After Daniel's resurrection, a decree went forth "unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and steadfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

And after the resurrection of Christ, a commission was given to the apostles to preach the gospel of peace to all nations, and Christ promised to be with them even to the end of the world. After his deliverance from the den of lions, "Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian."

Here is a faint gleam of Christ's glory by suffering. Daniel is described as interceding for his people (like the great Intercessor Himself) and praying for their restoration. And while he was praying, he was visited by Gabriel, the angel whose special function it appears to have been to bring messages of the Incarnation of Christ.¹

Besides being a type of Christ, Daniel is also a type of the last church. This is not strange, inasmuch as the only factor withholding the return of our Lord is a people made ready to meet Him—ready, because they will be like Him. It is written in Scripture that the harvest takes place "when the grain is ripe" (Mk 4:29). Says one writer, "Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own."²

Daniel, himself so much like Christ, points to that generation of Christians who will be most like

their Master. Our chapter asserts that "an excellent spirit was in him," and that men "could find no ground for complaint or any fault, because he was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him." The only excuse for antagonism had to be "in connection with the law of his God." Thus it will be again. Rev 13 enlarges the picture of Dan 6 and 3. Again false religion and civil powers will unite and condemn to death those who are blameless except concerning their preference for the law of God. The faithful, because they refuse to conform to a decree of false religion, will be surrounded by men as anxious for their death as hungry lions for their prey.

How can we explain the exceptional character of this ancient prophet? What can he teach us in our search for righteousness? First and foremost he was a product of "Christian" education. He had been reared so faithfully in a believing home that the world's tests broke upon him as helplessly as waves against cliffs. The Jews have a maxim which says that "Jerusalem was destroyed because the education of her children was neglected." But it is also true that the restoration of Jews to Jerusalem resulted from the proper education of a few Hebrew youths, among them Daniel. The suggestion of Haskell is almost certainly correct:

Daniel had a godly mother who knew of the prophecy concerning the destruction of their city. She repeated to her son the words of God, that some day Hebrew children must stand in the heathen court at Babylon. Carefully did this mother teach her son to read the parchment scrolls of the prophets. The history of Israel was studied; the story of Nadab and Abihu was told and retold. The effect of strong drink was impressed upon the mind. The laws of his own being were studied. He knew that excess in eating and drinking would so dull the mind that the voice of God could not be heard.³

Daniel had been reared to believe in holiness—wholeness for God. Witness the record: "Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself" (1:8). His body was considered the object of careful stewardship, but so were time and talent. Prayer, for this man, was as necessary as breathing, and the study of the Word likewise (see 9:1-3). His religion did not consist merely of

saving his own soul. An entire chapter is dedicated to his intercession for his people (ch. 9). He had the grace of humility, and ever says, "We have sinned," not "they . . ." Consider the tremendous pathos of the simple record at the close of the first chapter. "And Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus."

This was the type of man God could deliver. A man who did not deign to fuss, fight, or fume; one who was the same in trial as in prosperity, trusting God in darkness as in light; one who served God continually. "This Daniel prospered," says the last verse of chapter 6. There have been other Daniels perhaps, in name, but this one prayed and praised. This Daniel was persecuted, but he was

also protected, preserved, preferred, and prospered.

This Daniel believed in the law of his God. Today the only absolute for many people is relativity! Men laugh at sin, but they cannot laugh the results out of their bones, hearts, and homes. It is forgotten that *evil* is *live* spelled *backward*. Christ's way is not merely sanctity but sanity. What He commands, life itself commends. Daniel proved it. And so may we!

¹ Wordsworth, p. xix.

² Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons* (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1900), p. 69.

³ Haakell, p. 19.

Commentary on Daniel 6

1 It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom a hundred and twenty satraps, to be throughout the whole kingdom; ²and over them three presidents, of whom Daniel was one, to whom these satraps should give account, so that the king might suffer no loss. ³Then this Daniel became distinguished above all the other presidents and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. ⁴Then the presidents and the satraps sought to find a ground for complaint against Daniel with regard to the kingdom; but they could find no ground for complaint or any fault, because he was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him. ⁵Then these men said, "We shall not find any ground for complaint against this Daniel unless we find it in connection with the law of his God."

6 Then these presidents and satraps came by agreement to the king and said to him, "O King Darius, live for ever! ⁷All the presidents of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the counselors and the governors are agreed that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an interdict, that whoever makes petition to any god or man for thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions. ⁸Now, O king, establish the interdict and sign the document, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, which cannot be revoked." ⁹Therefore King Darius signed the document and interdict.

Note it is not said that the kingdom was Median, but only that the king was (5:31). The significance of the allusion is seen when it is compared with similar expressions in 5:30 and 6:28, "Chaldean king," "Cyrus the Persian." The reason why the age of Darius is recorded is probably to anticipate the shortness of his reign.

Critics have questioned what seems a description of the division of the empire into a hundred satrapies, for the ancient inscriptions indicate a much smaller number. However, the text does not actually declare such a division of the countries but only makes reference to officials. Not every satrap implies a satrapy. The term was sometimes used for an official appointed to a special task.

No time is lost by the writer in recurring to his favorite theme—the oppression of God's people by the heathen, and His power to protect and vindicate them. The situation is parallel to chapter 3 as already indicated, but the trial is more searching. It would have been infinitely easy for one in danger of his life to say his prayers while lying in bed rather than to make a risky demonstration of piety.

The major difference between the tests of chapters 3 and 6 is that the former did not spring from premeditated persecution. Thus it has been in the history of the world. Through the centuries the

refusal of Christians to conform to existing patterns of behavior has evoked persecution, but according to Scripture, in the last days a concerted plot against believers will be deliberately set on foot by all the nations of earth (see Rev 13).

The word translated "by agreement" in verse 6 ("thronging," in the RSV footnote) occurs only in this chapter and Ps 2:1. The same idea is present in Lk 23:10, where the vehement accusation against Christ by the chief priests of Jewry is mentioned. Verse 7 is obviously an untruth. Not *all* the presidents, etc., had agreed. The president against whom the plot was aimed had, naturally enough, not been consulted.

The content of the decree seems childish to the Western mind, but consideration of the times here referred to suggests good reasons for the credibility of the account. Change of governments sometimes led to religious riots because of antagonism to new systems of worship. A lull in religious activities could well be considered a safeguard against an uprising. If the RSV footnote, "thronging," is to be preferred, as many think, then the idea conveyed would be that an emergency was claimed to be at the root of this strategy. This would explain also why Darius did not wait to consult with one of his three presidents, the absent Daniel.

10 When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem; and he got down upon his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously. ¹¹Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and supplication before his God. ¹²Then they came near and said before the king, concerning the interdict, "O king! Did you not sign an interdict, that any man who makes petition to any god or man within thirty days except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?" The king answered, "The thing stands fast, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked." ¹³Then they answered before the king, "That Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no heed to you, O king, or the interdict you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day."

14 Then the king, when he heard these words, was much distressed, and set his mind to deliver Daniel; and he labored till the sun went down to rescue him.

There was no presumptuous behavior on Daniel's part, for the windows were already open, and neither was there fear—he left them open. He prayed "toward Jerusalem," for although the temple was in ruins, the place was holy ground.

It should be noticed that when the enemies of Daniel accused him to the king, they stressed his Jewish origin. Next came the accusation that

Daniel had despised the person of the king and his decree. But the text indicates that the monarch was not convinced. Probably he now clearly penetrated into the duplicity of his advisers. Their subsequent loss would not have caused him one hundredth of the regret he had at the possibility of the loss of Daniel.

¹⁵Then these men came by agreement to the king, and said to the king, "Know, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no interdict or ordinance which the king establishes can be changed."

16 Then the king commanded, and Daniel was brought and cast into the den of lions. The king said to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!" ¹⁷And a stone was brought and laid upon the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords, that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel.

One cannot but be reminded of the weakness of rulers mentioned in the Gospels. Both Herod and Pilate also yielded to the pressure of those whose

opinions they feared, though the price was the sacrifice of an innocent life.

¹⁸Then the king went to his palace, and spent the night fasting; no diversions were brought to him, and sleep fled from him.

19 Then, at break of day, the king arose and went in haste to the den of lions. ²⁰When he came near to the den where Daniel was, he cried out in a tone of anguish and said to Daniel, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?"

The sealing of the den, and the early morning hastening to it by Daniel's friend, recalls similar events in connection with the burial of Christ.

Probably Daniel rested much better that night than Darius. There is no pillow like a good conscience.

²¹Then Daniel said to the king, "O king, live for ever! ²²My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths, and they have not hurt me, because I was found blameless before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no wrong."

This passage, like the similar one in chapter 3, shows that God is *able* to deliver, but as to whether He will or will not do so must ever be left in His hands to decide. He did not deliver Daniel from the decree of the king or from the horror of being thrust alive into the den of famished lions. In New Testament times he did not deliver John the Baptist. And in subsequent ages many martyrs left to perish were comforted as they recalled that one

whose fidelity had been attested by Christ Himself had yet been permitted to suffer.

When Daniel's work was finished, then he was appointed rest (12:13), but until then the raging lions were restrained. One is reminded of Bunyan's pilgrims who found the way menacing but, on courageously continuing, found to their joy that the lions were chained, leaving just sufficient room for passage.

²³Then the king was exceedingly glad, and commanded that Daniel be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no kind of hurt was found upon him, because he had trusted in his God. ²⁴And the king commanded, and those men who had accused Daniel were brought and cast into the den of lions—they, their children, and their wives; and before they reached the bottom of the den the lions overpowered them and broke all their bones in pieces.

**25 Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: "Peace be multiplied to you. ²⁶I make a decree, that in all my royal dominion men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel, for he is the living God,
enduring for ever;
his kingdom shall never be destroyed,
and his dominion shall be to the end.**

**²⁷He delivers and rescues,
he works signs and wonders
in heaven and on earth,
he who has saved Daniel
from the power of the lions."**

28 So this Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

Here again is the typical pattern of exaltation following deliverance and a corresponding judg-

ment upon the enemies of God's people. The punishment of the families was in accordance with

the cruel Persian custom of the day. It is quite apparent that Daniel's safety was not the result of poor appetite on the part of the lions.

The word *deliver* is again prominent in this chapter in preparation for its equivalent use in

12:1. Readers in the latter days are meant to be encouraged that the same God who delivered the three Hebrews from the fiery furnace and Daniel from the den of lions will also deliver them in the day of the last pogrom.

Preface to Daniel 7

This chapter faces both ways. It is linked with the preceding chapters by its language, Aramaic, and to the later chapters by its form, vision. It repeats the theme given to Nebuchadnezzar, but from here on it is Daniel, the man of God, who received the visions and the interpretations. It is fitting that it should still be written in Aramaic, for the message that earthly kingdoms are temporary because of their opposition to God and His people is again set forth. It is likewise fitting that the chapter be a record of a vision given to Daniel, because the subsequent revelations conveyed to the prophet continue the emphasis of this one, namely, that the saints can expect nothing but ferocity from worldly powers and that vindication from above cannot be expected prior to the last judgment.

Chapter 7 is dated fifty years after chapter 2. In the interim the prophet has seen not only the persecution of his people but also the fragile favors of reigning monarchs. Babylon is now about to go down, and the period of the captivity foretold by Jeremiah is about three fourths past. What awaits the people of God? This revelation warns Daniel and his readers to expect renewed antagonism from the worldly powers. The experience recorded in chapter 6, which in time follows the present chapter, underlines this message.

All expositors of note admit that Dan 7 parallels Dan 2. If one and the same book presented two different series of four empires in related chapters, only confusion could result. The volume is too carefully written to permit that.

Why then should such a repetition be given? Why is Dan 2 insufficient? It is part of educational method to repeat important matters, but can other reasons be found for this duplication?

The chapter concerning the image gave a general survey of the future. Now that readers are familiar with the broad features of the territory, deeper investigations are encouraged. Furthermore, Dan 2 portrayed the worldly empires from a political and military viewpoint, which was appropriate for a dream given to an earthly despot. But the man of God now sees them from Heaven's viewpoint. God never gives His people any other representation of the kingdoms of this world than that of ravenous beasts of prey.¹

Third, it is Heaven's design to show that between the passing of the power represented by the legs of iron and the judgment indicated by the falling stone, the worst of all persecutions was to transpire, and that such persecution would come from a power at heart and by method worldly, and yet professing authority in religion—a power which by subtlety would grow from small

beginnings to world domination and would constitute the greatest threat of all time to the people of God. This power will act toward the saints and God as Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and Darius did before their humiliation by divine power. The pride, blasphemy, and persecution so characteristic of these monarchs is to be reincarnated and perpetuated till God intervenes in judgment at the end of history. Thus chapter 7 in one sense summarizes all that has gone before. In another sense it paves the way for the continuing descriptions of antichrist and Christ found in subsequent chapters.

We would stress the fact, however, that the message committed to Daniel, as with the message of God in all ages, contains not only bad news regarding the nature of man but good news regarding the gracious nature of God. After the dramatic description of antichrist we are given another scene equally dramatic. Heaven's court sits and awards its verdict to One like unto a Son of man, that henceforth all nations should serve Him in an everlasting kingdom.

Is this kingdom to be understood as the kingdom of grace or the kingdom of glory? Is the Son of man the symbol of the people of Israel, or is He the personal Messiah? Is the judgment pictured a continuous one or the last judgment? All these questions demand answers.

First, it should be said that the figure of the Son of man is the metaphor for the kingdom of God as certainly as was the stone in Dan 2. Both appear in connection with judgment, after the kingdoms of earth have had their reign. Both result in the eternal reign of the saints as Heaven takes over earth. *And both have individual as well as corporate application.* Christ applied both terms to Himself. He is the Stone (Lk 20:18), and He is the Son of man (Mt 24:27). Each of the four kingdoms had its human representatives, and so has the fifth kingdom. It is true that 7:14 compared with 7:27 shows that where the Son is, the saints are also. He represents them. But verse 14 declares that "all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him." This would apply more to Christ than to His followers.²

Inasmuch as the Son of man is emblematic of the kingdom of God as well as its Leader, we must

say that in this case, as with chapter 2, there is the implication of the prior kingdom of grace as well as the emphasis upon the kingdom of glory. The stress on humanity points to the Incarnation. Furthermore, Rev 4, 5, reechoes (but does not exhaust) this scene and applies it to the time of the ascension when the anthem was sounded: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power . . . and glory" (Rev 5:12). Thus Christ could say at the time of the Great Commission, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Mt 28:18). This statement is a direct reference to Dan 7:13, 14, as Greek Testaments and the margins of Bibles in English show.

But having said all of this, we insist that the seer is pointing us particularly to the last judgment when He who long ago had been given glory for His achievement now receives it for His people and their coming reign. The context is clear that it is the little horn who is condemned in this judgment and the saints oppressed by him are simultaneously justified. Judgment is given in their favor (v. 22). It is *after* the reign of all four kingdoms and *after* the "time, two times, and half a time" of the little horn's dominion that the thrones are placed and the court sits. The little horn continued its great works even during the judgment. The emphasis of the apocalyptic picture is certainly on the eschatological judgment. The repetition of this language in Rev 20:12 indicates the same. Is this event premillennial or postmillennial? That is, do verses 9-14 present Christ entering upon a preliminary judgment and His reception of the kingdom this side of the millennium or His entry into the executive judgment and His subsequent coronation after the millennium? The answer must be—both. Both the kingdom and the judgment have a repeated and an ultimate application.³

It is to be hoped that readers will not dwell so long upon the interpretation of the minutiae of this chapter as to miss the glorious panorama offered by the whole. Consider that Dan 7 begins with the Neo-Babylonian Empire which was the offspring of the first tyranny (see Gen 11:1-9; 10:8-10). It proceeds to relate the rise and fall of the dominant empires that pioneered Western and so-called Christian civilization, each of which affected the

land and people of Israel. With increasing detail as the landmarks of the centuries sweep by, the prophet tells of the fall of Rome long after the incarnation, ministry, and death of Christ. He proceeds to view the divisions of Rome that ultimately became the countries of Europe. Then he focuses upon a power, both civil and religious, which would emerge at the time of pagan Rome's fall and perpetuate its worst features until the very end of time. This reincarnated Rome that dabbles in both political and churchly affairs is seen decimating spiritual Israel and prospering for well over a thousand years. Antichrist is still in existence when the great judgment day dawns. Indeed, some of its boldest words are spoken on earth while that judgment day proceeds above. Then comes the end, first with the advent of the Son of man to the Father in the judgment, then to earth before and after the millennium to set up the everlasting kingdom of righteousness. How large and grand a prophetic canvas we possess in this chapter of Daniel!

¹ Rev 13, with its lamblike emblem, appears to contradict this rule, but the later mention of the lamb's speaking as a dragon indicates that this power is, if we may mix metaphors, a "wolf in sheep's clothing."

² See Keil, Young, Leupold, on Dan 7:13.

³ If this concept is strange to some, we would urge the study of such passages as Rev 5:12, 13:

"Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!" And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all therein, saying, "To him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might for ever and ever!"

When does this anthem apply? Commentators chiefly apply it to the time of Calvary or the second advent, or to both. We append an example, from one writer who ever reveals great depth of insight.

The occasions for this anthem of praise.

1. Christ's taking His priestly throne after His resurrection.

"The time had now come for the heavenly universe to receive their king. . . .

"All heaven was waiting to welcome the Saviour to the celestial courts. As He ascended, He led the way, and the multitude of captives set free at His resurrection followed. The heavenly host, with shouts and acclamations of praise and celestial song, attended the joyous train. . . .

"Then the portals of the city of God are opened wide, and the angelic throng sweep through the gates amid a burst of rapturous music. . . .

"With joy unutterable, rulers and principalities and powers acknowledge the supremacy of the Prince of life. The angel host prostrate themselves before Him, while the glad shout fills all the courts of heaven, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing!'

"Songs of triumph mingle with the music from angel harps, till heaven seems to overflow with joy and praise. Love has conquered. The lost is found. Heaven rings with voices in lofty strains proclaiming, 'Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever'" (Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 832-835).

2. Christ's first coronation after His second advent.

"The Son of God redeemed man's failure and fall; and now, through the work of the atonement, Adam is reinstated in his first dominion.

"Transported with joy, he beholds the trees that were once his delight. . . . He looks about him and beholds a multitude of his family redeemed, standing in the Paradise of God. Then he casts his glittering crown at the feet of Jesus, and falling upon His breast, embraces the Redeemer. He touches the golden harp, and the vaults of heaven echo the triumphant song, 'Worthy, worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and lives again!' The family of Adam take up the strain and cast their crowns at the Saviour's feet as they bow before Him in adoration" (Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 648).

3. The final coronation of Jesus at the end of the millennium.

"At the close of the thousand years, Christ again returns to the earth. . . .

"As the New Jerusalem, in its dazzling splendor, comes down out of heaven, it rests upon the place purified and made ready to receive it, and Christ, with His people and the angels, enters the Holy City. . . .

"With all the facts of the great controversy in view, the whole universe, both loyal and rebellious, with one accord declare: 'Just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints.'"

"The hour has come when Christ occupies His rightful position and is glorified above principalities and powers and every name that is named. . . . He looks upon the redeemed, renewed in His own image, every heart bearing the perfect impress of the divine, every face reflecting the likeness of their King. . . . And the song of praise ascends from the white-robed ones about the throne, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing'" (*ibid.*, pp. 662-671).

4. Throughout the eternal ages.

"The cross of Christ will be the science and the song of the redeemed through all eternity. In Christ glorified they will behold Christ crucified. . . . As the nations of the saved look upon their Redeemer and behold the eternal glory of the Father shining in His countenance; as they behold His throne, which is from everlasting to everlasting, and know that His kingdom is to have no end, they break forth in rapturous song: 'Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by His own most precious blood!'" (*ibid.*, pp. 651, 652).

Another example, found in Mk 14:62, reads:

"And Jesus said, 'I am; and you will see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.'"

Commentators inquire as to the time of application for this event. Some, on the basis of the "from now on" in Lk 22:69, apply it immediately from the time of the ascension, others to the second advent when He comes in judgment. Which is the correct view?

At the risk of being labeled as one who would have his cake and eat it too, the present writer must answer, "Both." The apotelesmatic principle, spelled out in earlier pages, solves all

such riddles. In reality such questions are no harder than this one: To which event does Mt 24 apply, the destruction of Jerusalem or the end of the world? or this one: When does Joel 2:28 apply, to Pentecost or to the latter rain of the Spirit before the end of the age?

Another example is the usage of "the lake of fire" in Revelation, applying both before and after the millennium (see SDA BC, Vol. 7, pp. 875, 876).

Commentary on Daniel 7

1 In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head as he lay in his bed. Then he wrote down the dream, and told the sum of the matter. ²Daniel said, "I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea. ³And four great beasts came up out of the sea, different from one another."

Babylon is nearing its end, and therefore the captivity of the Jews is also. To the prophet is given an outline of the future history of the world in its relationship to the experience of the people of God. An underlying theme here, as throughout the rest of the book, is that of "through suffering to glory." A second theme reflects Daniel's emphasis on theodicy—evil will have an end, for God will initiate and perpetuate His own everlasting kingdom of righteousness.

The great sea would have reminded Daniel of the Mediterranean. Nebuchadnezzar led his armies along the eastern shores of that midland sea; the Persian kings endeavored to command it by their fleets; from across its waters came Alexander, and later from an even more distant coast, the Romans. This sea witnessed most of the history between Daniel's day and Christ's. But the waters here pictured stand for the whole turbulent earth as well. Humanity swells with pride and

passion and is troubled by political agitations and revolutions. The tempestuous winds indicate the same. Frequently the world powers hostile to God and His people are symbolized by mighty waters (see Is 8:7f.; Jer 46:7, 9; 47:2; Rev 17:1, 15). This figure is similar to the metaphorical use of overflowing rivers for invading armies. The Old as well as the New Testament is full of natural imagery, and happy is the person whose imagination is stirred to spiritual meditation by the sight of emblems chosen by inspired writers.

Scripture often uses animals to represent the Gentile nations (see Eze 29:3f.; Is 27:1; 51:9). The word here used for "beast" stresses the idea of vigorous energy being used with tremendous violence. The four coming up from the sea as if onto the stage at once reminds us that God sees all things at one view. There is neither past nor future with Him. He is not in time; time is in Him.

4“The first was like a lion and had eagles’ wings. Then as I looked its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand upon two feet like a man; and the mind of a man was given to it.”

As gold is the king of metals, so the lion is the king of beasts, and the eagle of birds. These animals have been used elsewhere of Babylon (see Jer 4:7; 49:19; 50:17, 44; Lam 4:19; Eze 17:3, 12).

The lion motif is commonplace to archaeologists, having been found among the ruins of Babylon.

The change that came over the lion is reminiscent of the fact that after the conquest of Palestine, Babylon achieved no further extension of its dominion. The attack on Egypt yielded no

abiding fruit, and Nebuchadnezzar settled down to exercise his administrative capacity and constructive skill. That which, among other things, distinguishes a man from a beast of prey is that while the latter is destructive, man is constructive. Nabonidus, the last of Babylon's emperors, was decidedly a man of peace, being a scholar and an antiquarian. Thus he relinquished the command of the army to his dissolute son Belshazzar. It was with comparative ease that the empire was conquered by the Persians.

5“And behold, another beast, a second one, like a bear. It was raised up on one side; it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth; and it was told, ‘Arise, devour much flesh.’ ”

After the lion, the bear is one of the most rapacious of creatures. But it is slower, heavy-going, and less regal. The reference to its being raised up on one side reminds us of the dual nature of Medo-Persia, also symbolized by the breast and arms of the image and by the two horns of the ram (8:20). The three ribs point to the chief conquests of this kingdom, namely Babylon, Lydia, and

Egypt. The desire to “devour much flesh” led a later Darius to invade the west, thus bringing his armies to defeat on European soil. Certainly prior to that the Persian Empire was successful in devouring more than had Babylon. Greedy voraciousness, rather than royal dignity, thus characterizes Babylon's successor.

6“After this I looked, and lo, another, like a leopard, with four wings of a bird on its back; and the beast had four heads; and dominion was given to it.”

This symbolism emphasizes celerity of movement twice. A leopard or panther is noted for its swiftness, and the two pairs of wings point to a speed which was at least double that of Babylon's conquests. Immediately, one familiar with the visions of Daniel thinks of the he-goat of the next chapter, depicted as literally flying over the ground without touching it.

While duality marked Medo-Persia, this

empire is marked by a fourfold division. It is this increasing dissipation of rulership that to an Oriental mind marked a kingdom as inferior. The statement “dominion was given to it” does not appear in connection with the other beasts. It seems to emphasize the providential permission of, and spiritual purpose for, its conquests. The unifying of east and west by Alexander and the later universalizing of the language in which the

New Testament was to be written made the Greeks the precursors of Christian missionaries. God has His way even in the whirlwind of war.

The four heads deserve closer attention. The reality thus symbolized is seen by practically all commentators as the divisions of the empire after the strife that ensued on Alexander's death. A typical statement from historians reads:

When Alexander died, the authority passed to his generals, all trained in war, yet none qualified to fill the place of the master. As his son was but an infant, and as the generals began to fight among themselves for the first place, the empire naturally fell to pieces. The decisive battle among these generals was fought at Ipsus in Phrygia (301 BC). This was one of the most important battles of ancient times, as it determined the history of the empire till it fell under the power of Rome.

The victors divided the empire into kingdoms for themselves: Seleucus received Asia from Phrygia to India; western Asia Minor and Thrace fell to Lysimachus; Ptolemy became king of Egypt; and Cassander, already governor of Macedon, was now

recognized as sovereign. In this way four kingdoms arose from the empire. Somewhat later Lysimachus was killed and his realm divided. While most of his Asiatic possessions were annexed to the kingdom of Seleucus, barbarous tribes, including many Gauls, seized the interior of Thrace and threatened the Greek cities along the coast.³

It is declared later in the chapter that "as for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time" (v. 12). This is represented also in chapter 2, where all the elements of the image are broken at the same time. Again in chapter 4 the tree representing Babylon, though cut down, had roots left in the ground. These roots are the principles upon which Babylon established its government and religion. They remain with us today. Tyranny, pride, and sensuality, wherever manifested, reflect the ancient Babylonian system. Likewise Medo-Persia and Greece left their heritage for the world. Unbending cruelty and rationalistic confidence still characterize much of the modern world.

7⁴"After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, terrible and dreadful and exceedingly strong; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns."

A major purpose of the prophecy of this chapter is to draw particular attention to this fourth empire. There are three sections to the vision as a whole, the first embracing the three kingdoms, the third the Messiah's kingdom, and this present section devoted to the fourth world empire and its descendants, particularly the "little horn." No wonder that this beast is introduced with special solemnity.

The New Testament helps to identify this power. Rev 13 pictures a beast compounded from all four of Daniel's beasts, and it is interesting to note that the first three animals of Dan 7 are presented in an inverted order—leopard, bear, lion. John in his vision sees the ruling power of his day and the powers it had absorbed, and he describes the latter according to the sequence of

that process of absorption. Rome enveloped the Greek world, which had earlier swallowed up the Medo-Persian, which had gorged itself upon Babylonia.

Thus, according to the New Testament, the fourth beast has its own distinctive aspects but also the characteristics of the preceding three. No wonder Daniel pictures it as the most terrible of the four.

The question naturally arises, "Wherein is this fourth power diverse from the rest?" The symbolism suggests only one answer—the intensity of its aggressiveness. An ordinary beast will devour and break in pieces but leave what it does not want of the "kill." This beast, however, even stamps with its feet what remains over. It devours the whole earth, trampling it down and breaking it

to pieces (see v. 23). Fierce vengeance and spite are implied. The reference to "iron" teeth reinforces this viewpoint. The iron, of course, points back to the fourth metal of Nebuchadnezzar's image as well.

This fourth power is presented as having three phases. It is initially without the ten horns (v. 24), though the original presentation to the prophet includes them so as to stress the unity between the beast and its later horns. Following the divided state of this empire, as indicated by these horns, comes the "little horn" phase, which endures till the whole is cast into the fire. It seems that each of the phases receives "a deadly wound" from which

it revives and lives on in its successor. The empire is continued by a tenfold kingdom after its own fall. The ten kingdoms are hacked at by the little horn and three are uprooted. Henceforth the ten are subsidiary to the newcomer, which ultimately will have its dominion also taken away prior to its being consigned to the flames. The apocalypse of the New Testament continues this theme of the death and resurrection of Rome (see Rev 13 and 17). As the roots of the first Babylon clung grimly to earth, resisting eradication, so it is with the new Babylon of Rome. Its roots spread through the earth despite repeated blows, apparently fatal, to the trunk.

8 "I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots; and behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things."

The high point of the vision is now introduced. It will merge into the picture of the judgment and the coming of the Son of man. It is for the purpose of introducing this power that the prophecy has been given. *What is given in this chapter concerning the newcomer is to be enlarged upon in all the succeeding prophecies of the book.* It will be seen again in the "little horn" of the next chapter, in the "prince who is to come" of chapter 9, and in the willful king of the final prophetic outline. To Daniel this power is "the abomination that maketh desolate" (12:11, KJV), an idolatrous, destructive enemy of God's people. Furthermore, the New Testament will continue

the theme. Christ will speak of "the abomination of desolation" (Mt 24:15, KJV) threatening His church in the same manner as literal Rome threatened literal Israel. Paul will tell of its invasion of "the temple of God," showing itself off as though divine, and John will speak of it in terms of a Jezebel presiding over the entire Roman world and ultimately threatening the faithful remnant of Christendom with death. This sequence of references to the power now under consideration illustrates the considerable importance of the present chapter. Before continuing with the elucidation of the "little horn," we will notice what follows.

**9 "As I looked,
thrones were placed
and one that was ancient of days took his seat;
his raiment was white as snow,
and the hair of his head like pure wool;
his throne was fiery flames,
its wheels were burning fire.**

¹⁰A stream of fire issued

and came forth from before him;
 A thousand thousands served him,
 and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him;
 the court sat in judgment,
 and the books were opened.

¹¹I looked then because of the sound of the great words which the horn was speaking. And as I looked, the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire. ¹²As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time. ¹³I saw in the night visions,

and behold, with the clouds of heaven
 there came one like a son of man,
 and he came to the Ancient of Days
 and was presented before him.

**¹⁴And to him was given dominion
 and glory and kingdom,
 that all peoples, nations, and languages
 should serve him;
 his dominion is an everlasting dominion,
 which shall not pass away,
 and his kingdom one
 that shall not be destroyed.”**

The atrocious deeds of the little horn call for the intervention of Heaven. Suffering saints echo the cry, “How long, O Lord?” until the hour dawns when the “Ancient of Days” and His court take their place for judgment?

The reference to “books” of record as part of the apocalyptic imagery of judgment is not unique to this passage (see Ps 56:8; 69:28; 139:16; Ex 32:32, 33; Php 4:3; Rev 20:12; 21:27). Dan 12:1 also refers to an examination of the heavenly account as taking place prior to the coming of Christ.

“The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
 Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit
 Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
 Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.”
 Omar Khayyám—*Rubáiyát*, Stanza 71.

Only the blood of Christ has the power to expunge from the celestial archives the statement of our follies and selfishness, and even the atonement does not cancel the temporal results of deviations from rectitude. An understanding of the solemnity of each choice should make us walk as those aware of the eternal ramifications of every thought, word, and deed.

The holiness of God is emphasized by the symbols of white wool and burning fire. His eternal nature is hinted at by the expression “Ancient of Days.” His absolute sovereignty is stressed by mention of the hosts of unnumbered millions who stand in His presence awaiting His bidding.

The divine purpose being realized in history is illustrated by the coming of one “like a son of

man" to whom dominion is given in order that "all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him." Thus it is taught that there is to be a fifth empire—one from the heavens, though a Son of earth shall be its sovereign. The word in verse 14 translated *serve* is used in Biblical Aramaic only for worship. Thus it is implied that the "son of man" is divine.

We immediately recognize in this the parallel

to 2:44, 45. It is also parallel to the climax of both the next vision in 8:14 and the last one of the book (see 12:1-3). In all these instances holiness is vindicated by the avenging power of God destroying a wickedness and establishing everlasting righteousness. Verse 10 speaks of a judgment that begins in heaven while the little horn is still functioning on earth² but that climaxes at the Second Advent.

15 "As for me, Daniel, my spirit within me was anxious and the vision of my head alarmed me. ¹⁶I approached one of those who stood there and asked him the truth concerning all this. So he told me, and made known to me the interpretation of the things. ¹⁷These four great beasts are four kings who shall arise out of the earth. ¹⁸But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, for ever and ever.' "

As chapter 2 presented a series of symbols and then an interpretation, so it is here. Verse 17 begins the angelic commentary on verses 1-14. Note the interchange of "kings" and "kingdoms" in verses 17, 18, 22, 23. Thus the four beasts are four kings, i.e., kingdoms, but ultimately "the

saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom." The earthly kingdoms had their ruling heads such as Nebuchadnezzar, Darius, and Cyrus, and the heavenly kingdom too has a ruler, even the Son of man.

19 "Then I desired to know the truth concerning the fourth beast, which was different from all the rest, exceedingly terrible, with its teeth of iron and claws of bronze; and which devoured and broke in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet; ²⁰and concerning the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up and before which three of them fell, the horn which had eyes and a mouth that spoke great things, and which seemed greater than its fellows. ²¹As I looked, this horn made war with the saints, and prevailed over them, ²²until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints received the kingdom."

See how quickly the interpretation passes to the fourth beast, its ten horns, and the climactic little horn. For the first time what had already been implied is spelled out—the little horn is to make

war with the saints, and prevail over them, and this terrible victory would continue until the time of the judgment. There was to be no rest for the saints this side of eternity. Daniel had been anticipating

the joy of the reestablishment of Israel in the Holy Land, but the angel tells him that the righteous are to be subjected to the refining fires of persecution till the days of pilgrimage are over.

In verse 22 it is said that judgment (or "vindication" as some would translate it) is given *for* the saints. The Aramaic preposition here introduces a dative of advantage.³ Judgment is always a "doubleheader." It condemns the wicked and vindicates the righteous. Too often expositors have seen only one group or the other as concerned by the great assize, but as in Mt 25:31-

46 and elsewhere, both parties are ultimately involved.

This reference to the vindication of the saints (see 7:22, TLB⁴) parallels the statement in the next chapter that the sanctuary shall be vindicated. Note the similarity between "this horn made war . . . and prevailed . . . *until* . . . judgment was given" and 8:13, 14, "'For how long . . . the giving over of the . . . host?' . . . 'For two thousand and three hundred evenings and mornings; then shall the sanctuary be restored to its rightful state.' "

**23 "Thus he said: 'As for the fourth beast,
there shall be a fourth kingdom on earth,
which shall be different from all the kingdoms,
and it shall devour the whole earth,
and trample it down, and break it to pieces.**

**²⁴As for the ten horns,
out of this kingdom
ten kings shall arise
and another shall arise after them;
he shall be different from the former ones,
and shall put down three kings.**

**²⁵He shall speak words against the Most High,
and shall wear out the saints of the Most High,
and shall think to change the times and the law;
and they shall be given into his hand
for a time, two times, and half a time.' "**

One should note the sequence in this passage, particularly as viewed from the standpoint of the following verses, which picture the judgment and the end. Daniel is told that the little horn is the successor of ten kingdoms that follow the fourth great empire from his day. It must be kept in mind that all these powers affect the worshipers of the true God. Not only are the four great monarchies the dominant powers of civilization in succession, but they are the powers that oppressed Israel. Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome in turn

stood in the Holy Land and threatened its host and sanctuary. Similarly the ten kingdoms that follow the fourth empire will menace the saints, and the little horn will almost wipe them out. What the old Babylon had done to literal Israel, spiritual Babylon will do to spiritual Israel. The whole Book of Revelation revolves around this pattern.

We would offer a caveat regarding the interpretation of the ten horns. The number ten should no more be pressed in this context than in 1:20. It is a round number frequently used in

Scripture. The reality must, however, be more than five or six, or the round number four would have been used. What is represented may indeed rise to a dozen or fifteen and not transcend the symbolism. This precisely fits the situation after the fall of the Roman Empire. The resulting fragments were sometimes more, sometimes less, and rarely stable for long. Thus the lists usually used to illustrate the prophecy differ slightly one from another.⁵

We turn to the little horn reluctantly, for the description is depressing rather than inspiring. Nevertheless, because of the prominence of "the mystery of iniquity" (2 Th 2:7, KJV) throughout the rest of this book and throughout the eschatological portions of the New Testament, ignorance on this matter would be folly and invite great evil. We are also reminded that it was the study of passages such as this that helped to launch the Protestant Reformation. While we have no wish to renew the bitterness of those days, neither would we neglect any of the "sure word of prophecy" (2 Pe 1:19, KJV), particularly the portion that our Lord has admonished His latter-day people to understand (see Mt 24:15).

Far too often Christians have indulged their lower natures by venting antagonism and even hatred toward the institution they believe to be here represented by the little horn. All need to realize that the greatest deception of the human mind is the belief that a mere assent to doctrinal orthodoxy constitutes righteousness. When we recall that the issue of the judgment is pictured as depending on the one point of Christlike love or lack of it (Mt 25:40-45), our spirits will be sufficiently subdued to meditate upon the present passage of Scripture.

The prophecy at this point tells the same story as our own hearts and our personal experience. We are "prone to wander, . . . prone to leave the God . . . [we] love." It is obvious from the work of this little horn that it is a religious power, for it deals with religious issues and opposes those with a religion different from its own. But this power, though it practices worship to some degree, has lost the light of love and law. To comment upon this prophetic symbol is not to offer condemnation of any religious system or group. It is but to acknowledge the historical fulfillment of the

tendencies of our common human nature.

The Bible testifies that declension inevitably sets in when the initial ardor for Christ begins to cool. Soon after the deliverance of a human family from the Flood, their descendants, for the most part, united in the apostasy of Babel. Within six weeks from the giving of the law on Sinai by God Himself to the redeemed people, there came the tragic lapse into idolatrous worship of the golden calf.

Centuries later God again delivered His people from bondage, this time that of Babylon, but the vast majority refused their freedom and remained in Babylon rather than return to Jerusalem. Of those who returned, the majority set about constructing their own homes in luxury rather than seeking first to establish the temple of God. By the time of the First Advent the religious leaders of the most enlightened people on the face of the globe had hardened into ritualistic, self-righteous pedants, hating all who differed from them in the slightest particular. These religionists crucified the Lord of glory. And within less than a generation after Christ, the disciples were writing to warn the churches that many ungodly men had crept in unawares, and that unless great care was exercised, the churches would fall away from righteousness to perdition.

T. D. Bernard has aptly summarized the situation within the church of the Roman world toward the close of the first century:

How fair was the morning of the Church! how swift its progress! What expectations it would have been natural to form of the future history which had begun so well! Doubtless they were formed in many a sanguine heart: but they were clouded soon. It became evident that, when the first conflicts were passed, others would succeed; and that the long and weary war with the powers of darkness had only just begun. The wrestlings "against principalities and powers, and the spiritual forces of wickedness in heavenly places" (Eph 6:12) were yet to be more painfully felt, and believers were prepared to be "partakers of Christ's sufferings," and not to "think it . . . strange concerning the fiery trial which . . . [was] to try . . . [them], as though some strange thing happened unto . . . [them]" (1 Pe 4:12, 13, [KJV]).

But worse for the Church than the fightings without were the fears within. Men who had long

professed the Gospel "had need to be taught again what were the first principles of the oracles of God" (Heb 5:12). They were falling "from grace," and turning back to weak and beggarly elements, whereunto they desired again to be in bondage" (Gal 5:4; 4:9). "Some had already turned aside after Satan (1 Ti 5:15)," and, where there was no special prevalence of error, a coldness and worldliness of spirit drew forth the sad reflection that "all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's" (Php 2:21). Contentions were rife, and schisms were spreading; and men, in the name of Christ and of truth, were "provoking one another, envying one another." New forms of error began to arise, from the combination of Christian ideas with the rudiments of the world and the vagaries of oriental philosophy.

Here were men, like Jannes and Jambres who withstood Moses, "resisting the truth, reprobate concerning the faith" (2 Ti 3:8). Here were "Hymenæus and Philetus, who concerning the truth had erred, saying that the resurrection was past already" (2 Ti 2:17). Here was the "knowledge falsely so called" (1 Ti 6:20), teeming with a thousand protean forms of falsehood.

While the Apostles wrote, the actual state and the visible tendencies of things showed too plainly what Church history would be; and, at the same time, prophetic intimations made the prospect still more dark: for "the Spirit spake expressly, that in the latter times men would depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils" (1 Ti 4:1)—that "in the last days grievous times should come," marked by a darkness of moral condition which it might have been expected that Gospel influences would have dispelled (2 Ti 3:1-5)—that "there would be scoffers in the last days, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming?" (2 Pe 3:3)—that the day of the Lord would not be "till the apostasy had come first, and the man of sin had been revealed, the son of perdition, the adversary who exalts himself above all that is called God or an object of worship, so that he sits in the Temple of God, showing himself that he is God" (2 Th 2:4-7). "The mystery of lawlessness was already working, and as antichrist should come, even then were there many antichrists" (1 Jn 2:18, 22), men "denying the Father and the Son," "denying the Lord that bought them" (2 Pe 2:1), "turning the grace of God into lasciviousness" (Jude 4), and "bringing upon themselves swift destruction."

I know not how any man, in closing the Epistles, could expect to find the subsequent history of the

Church essentially different from what it is. In those writings we seem, as it were, not to witness some passing storms which clear the air, but to feel the whole atmosphere charged with the elements of future tempest and death. Every moment the forces of evil show themselves more plainly. They are encountered, but not dissipated.

Or, to change the figure, we see battles fought by the leaders of our band, but no security is promised by their victories. New assaults are being prepared; new tactics will be tried; new enemies pour in; the distant hills are black with gathering multitudes, and the last exhortations of those who fall at their posts call on their successors to "endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ" (2 Ti 2:3), and "earnestly to contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints" (Jude 3).

The fact which I observe is not merely that these indications of the future are in the Epistles, but that they increase as we approach the close, and after the doctrines of the Gospel have been fully wrought out, and the fulness of personal salvation and the ideal character of the Church have been placed in the clearest light, the shadows gather and deepen on the external history. The last words of St. Paul in the second Epistle to Timothy, with the Epistles of St. John and St. Jude, breathe the language of a time in which the tendencies of that history had distinctly shown themselves.⁴

These tendencies accelerated in the centuries that followed. With the "conversion" of Emperor Constantine, the church was brought into close liaison with the state, establishing a pattern that dominated medieval Europe until after the Reformation and bringing a train of error and woe.

Because the Scriptures were inaccessible to men, the instincts of the natural heart too often replaced the divine principles. Vestiges of pagan worship were readily incorporated into the Christian church, and the spirit of intolerance so natural to the unrenowned heart frequently bore sway.

When Christ sought followers, He presented the cross. To the multitudes that followed Him He had one message: "Now great multitudes accompanied him; and he turned and said to them, 'If any one comes to me and does not hate [love (not) less] his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. Whosoever

does not bear his own cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple" (Lk 14:25-27).

But His church forgot this manner of approach. By the third and fourth centuries of our era, converts were being won by smoothing out the differences between the religion of Christ and other faiths. At this time, for example, the Sabbath of the fourth commandment became gradually displaced by the pagan festival day of Sunday. The linking of church and secular government was the attempt to supply the lack of the power of the Holy Spirit, and pride rather than humility began to walk in state, not because ancients were worse than moderns, but rather because they were of the same weak nature as ourselves.

The little horn of Dan 7 thus represents religion run to seed—the system of church and state that dominated medieval times. This supremacy endured for "a time, times and a half," three and a half prophetic years, or 1260 actual years from AD 537 to 1798 (see Eze 4:6 and Num 14:34 for examples of this year-day principle). In 538 the church clothed in civil authority overcame the last of three barbaric powers opposing it, but in 1798 secular opposition in the form of Napoleonic armies suspended the European dominion of the church-state system.

We can thank God that even during such dark centuries there were some who cherished the flickering lamp of truth. Of these, some stood in prominent places in the church while others were continually persecuted by the religious authorities.

The identity of the little horn can be established in a more systematic way by marshaling the evidence in a series of identification marks. Such writers as H. G. Guinness have done this.

The main points in the nature, character, and actions of this "little horn," which we must note in order to discover the power intended, are these:

1. Its *place*: within the body of the fourth empire.
2. The *period* of its origin: soon after the division of the Roman territory into ten divisions.
3. Its *nature*: different from the other kingdoms, though in some aspects like them. It was a horn, but with eyes and mouth. It would be a kingdom like the

rest, a monarchy; but its kings would be overseers or bishops or prophets.

4. Its *moral character*: boastful and blasphemous; great words spoken against the Most High.

5. Its *lawlessness*: it would claim authority over times and laws.

6. Its *opposition to the saints*: it would be a persecuting power, and that for so long a period that it would wear out the saints of the Most High, who would be given into its hands for a time.

7. Its *duration*: "time, [two] times, and half [a time]," or 1260 years.

8. Its *doom*: it would suffer the loss of its dominion before it was itself destroyed. "They shall take away his dominion to consume and destroy it to the end."

Here are eight distinct and perfectly tangible features. If they all meet in one great reality, if we find them all characterizing one and the same power, can we question that *that* is the power intended? They do all meet in the Roman Papacy, . . . and we are therefore bold to say it is the great and evil reality predicted.⁷

We would offer a more precise delineation still, as follows:

1. *A Small Beginning* (7:8). From a "little horn" whose roots existed prior to Rome's fall, this power gradually grows into an ecclesiastical despotism that dominates Europe and spreads into all the world. In Acts 20:29, 30; 2 Th 2:7; and 2 Pe 2:10-22 we are told that apostasy had already begun in the days of Paul and Peter, an apostasy which, according to the Bible's last book, would threaten to engulf the church of Christ as it enlisted the powers of kings and governors (see Rev 17:1-6, 12-14). This apostasy, stamped with the name of Babylon of old, assumes also the characteristics and dominion of Rome. Because Revelation draws from the description of the little horn when characterizing the antichrist, we can be sure that this linking of the incipient apostasy of apostolic times with the union of church and state in later Europe is well founded (see Rev 13:5-7). The love of preeminence warned against in one of the last New Testament books (3 Jn 9) grew from the small beginnings of pride in local congregations to the strife between later bishops of Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople, Rome, and others, finally

issuing in a system claiming power in heaven, hell, and earth.

2. *Another Kingdom* (7:24). This eleventh horn is as verily a kingdom as any other of the ten. It will claim civil as well as religious authority. The papal bull *Unam Sanctam* (1302) borrowed from Saint Bernard the theory of the two swords thus:

In this Church and in its power are two swords, to wit, a spiritual and a temporal, and this we are taught by the words of the Gospel, for when the Apostles said, "Behold, here are two swords" (in the Church, namely, since the Apostles were speaking), the Lord did not reply that it was too many, but enough. And surely he who claims that the temporal sword is not in the power of Peter has but ill understood the word of our Lord when he said, "Put up thy sword in its scabbard." Both, therefore, the spiritual and the material swords, are in the power of the Church, the latter indeed to be used for the Church, the former by the Church, the one by the priest, the other by the hand of kings and soldiers, but by the will and sufferance of the priest. It is fitting, moreover, that one sword should be under the other, and the temporal authority subject to the spiritual power.⁶

3. *A Different Kingdom* (7:24). This was a kingdom claiming men's souls as well as their bodies. It was different, indeed, from all its predecessors.

4. *Its Origin Among the Ten* (7:8). The little horn comes up "among them," i.e., among the other horns. It must be a Roman power, having its origin in the Roman head. Consider the following account that tells the same story as all other historians of the birth of the Middle Ages:

The Empire was falling into decay. The Barbarians knew that its life was failing, that the old organism was worn out, and they hastened to take possession of the remains. From every direction they came for the spoils. The Saxons and the Angles settled in Great Britain; the Franks invaded Northern Gaul; the Visigoths made Spain and the region south of the Loire their own; the Burgundians took possession of the upper valley of the Rhone; the Vandals made conquests in Africa. The Ostrogoths and Lombards were waiting for their turn to come. Among these new invaders, some were heretics, others were pagans. What is to become of the

Church? Are its days numbered, and is the Empire to bring it down as its companion into an open tomb?

No, the Church will not descend into the tomb. It will survive the Empire. It will have to pass through days of distress. It will witness calamity after calamity, ruins heaped upon ruins. But in the midst of the greatest sadness, it will receive precious consolations. One after another, these barbarian peoples will submit to its laws, and will count it a glory to be the Church's children. The frontiers of the Church will be extended; its institutions, for a moment shaken by the Barbarians, will be consolidated, developed, and will adapt themselves to their surroundings. The papacy, most sorely tried of all, will make a new advance. At length a second empire will arise, and of this empire the Pope will be the master—more than this, he will be the master of Europe. He will dictate his orders to kings who will obey him.⁷

5. *Manifested After the Development of the Ten* (7:8). Not until the breakup of the Roman Empire would this power come into prominence. It was in the sixth century that papal supremacy was asserted and accepted.

6. *Uproots Three of the Ten Horns* (7:8). The account says that "three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots" through the aggressive thrust of the newcomer. The record of history is that the Arian powers of the Heruli, the Vandals, and the Ostrogoths gave way to that new system of religious orthodoxy that achieved its ends by the temporal power of princes. The Lombards, also originally Arian, renounced that faith and by compliance with orthodoxy guaranteed their continued existence. In contrast, we may date the fall of the Heruli as AD 493, the Vandals AD 534, and the Ostrogoths AD 538, though remnants of each nation survived for a time, but without influencing the international scene.

7. *Human Eyes* (7:8). The emphasis here is upon intelligence beyond the ordinary. The same shrewdness ascribed in the later chapters to antichrist is indicated (cf. 8:23-25; 11:21-27).

8. *Arrogant Appearance* (7:20). The classical example of such a manifestation was Pope Gregory VII's humiliation of Henry IV of Germany. After being excommunicated and dethroned by papal influence, Henry, attended by his wife and a servant, crossed the Alps in

midwinter. At the pope's castle he was kept in an outer court in the severe cold with uncovered head and naked feet. Only after three days of fasting and confession was he granted pardon. Gregory boasted that it was his duty "to pull down the pride of kings."

9. *Blasphemous Speech* (7:25). "He shall speak words against the Most High." This is explained in later parallels as meaning that self-magnification which claims the place of God (see 8:25; 11:36; 2 Th 2:3, 4). The word *against* used in this verse literally means "to the side of." Thus this power claims the very heavens as its own. History records many examples of such claims by the Papacy. At the Fifth Lateran Council (1512) it was declared concerning the pope: "Thou art another God on earth." As vicar of the Son of God, the church has claimed that the pope can modify divine law and claim the subservience of every human creature (see the bull *Unam Sanctam*). Such claims have been modified in public announcements of very recent years, but historically speaking, the present humility is a new thing for the Papacy. We believe that some modern leaders of the Roman hierarchy (e.g., Pope John) would have relegated all such past claims to limbo as relics of a bygone age. According to Holy Writ, however, as the wheel of time continues to revolve, from the final manifestation of antichrist the world will once more hear all-encompassing claims to the bodies and souls of men.

10. *A Persecuting Power* (7:25). "He shall . . . wear out the saints of the Most High." It perpetuates the "breaking," "crushing," "shattering," "devouring," "trampling," of the legions of pagan Rome. T. R. Birks summarized the fulfillment thus:

After the signal of open martyrdom had been given in the Canons of Orleans, there followed the extirpation of the Albigenses under the form of a crusade, the establishment of the Inquisition, the cruel attempts to extinguish the Waldenses, the martyrdoms of the Lollards, the cruel wars to exterminate the Bohemians, the burning of Huss and Jerome, and multitudes of other confessors, before the Reformation; and afterwards, the ferocious

cruelties practiced in the Netherlands, the martyrdoms of Queen Mary's reign, the extinction by fire and sword of the Reformation in Spain and Italy, by fraud and open persecution in Poland, the Massacre of Bartholomew, the persecution of the Huguenots by the League, the extirpation of the Vaudois, and all the cruelties and prejudices connected with the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. These are the more open and conspicuous facts which explain the prophecy, besides the slow and secret murders of the holy tribunal of the Inquisition.¹⁰

It should be pointed out again that this record gives no one leave to point the finger at any contemporary group or individual. The historical account is an indictment of sinful human nature. Protestants, as well as Catholics, have persecuted. The records of the beginnings of the Reformation in Switzerland, Germany, England, and elsewhere are not without abundant evidence that Protestant "flesh" has been as cruel as Catholic when circumstances permitted. The early founding of Protestant America also includes numerous illustrations of the same fact. Wherever there is hatred rather than love, the spirit of antichrist reigns, whatever the religious profession may be.

11. *A Lawless Power* (7:25). "He shall . . . think to change the times and the law." These "times" are religious times as the translation of "sacred seasons" in the Smith and Goodspeed version indicates. Paul calls antichrist "the man of lawlessness" (see 2 Th 2:3). The evidence of submission to God is always obedience, and the chief evidence of rebellion is lawlessness.

1 Ki 12:32, 33 indicates that a distinctive mark of apostasy in the typical age was the changing of the sacred times. Men appointed times "devised of . . . [their] own heart" instead of submitting to the divine commandment. There is only one sacred season mentioned in what is preeminently the statement of the divine law, that is, in the Ten Commandments, and that is the Sabbath. It is a sacred season involving the recognition of two divinely appointed times: the timing sequence of the day and the timing sequence of the week. Both are involved in true Sabbath observance. This fourth commandment has come to be a commandment lightly thought of, despite the fact that both the great blessings and the greatest curses of

Scripture are associated with its observance or nonobservance (cf. Eze 20:12, 20; 22:26-31; Is 58:13, 14; 56:1-5; Jer 17:19-27).

Why should antichrist attack the sacred law at its heart—the Sabbath commandment? Because it is indeed its heart, not merely in a literary sense, but as regards its significance. This is the one commandment that tells us who it is that thus arrogates the right to control the behavior of all men everywhere. It is the one commandment that tells us why we should obey the other nine. It is because the Lawgiver is our Creator that obedience is our bounden duty. All duties flow from our creaturehood. Furthermore, this commandment is the one commandment that illustrates the gospel (see Heb 4:3-10).

This allusion in Scripture to the law of God and its sacred seasons is so important that moderns could well stop and meditate upon its significance for our own days and our own persons. It is quite apparent that the great adversary has seen in such an attack, as sketched in 7:25, a masterstroke. The New Testament apocalypse, which is the companion to Daniel, seems to teach that it is this special characteristic of lawlessness that will lead to the enforcement of "the mark of the beast" upon a desperate world in the last days.¹¹

With this in mind we add well-known quotations illustrating the fulfillment of this prophecy regarding the change of the sacred seasons and the law. At the Council of Trent the change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week by the Catholic Church was urged as evidence that tradition stands above Scripture.¹²

Keenan's *Doctrinal Catechism* says:

Q. Have you any other way of proving that the Church has power to institute festivals of precept?

A. Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her—she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday the seventh day, a change for which there is no Scriptural authority.¹³

The Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine received on January 25, 1910, the "apostolic blessing" of Pope Pius X. On this subject of the change of the Sabbath, it says:

Q. Which is the Sabbath day?

A. Saturday is the Sabbath day.

Q. Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?

A. We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church, in the Council of Laodicea (AD 336), transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday.¹⁴

12. *Supremacy for 1260 Years* (7:25). In apocalyptic prophecy, time as well as other matters is sometimes symbolically couched. See Appendix F for a discussion of the year-day principle. For the present we would but point out that in harmony with Num 14:34, Eze 4:6, and the passages in the Old Testament where "many days" actually means "many years" we interpret "time, 2 times, and a half" as three and a half symbolic years, or 1260 symbolic days (cf. Rev 11:2, 3; 12:6, 14; 13:5). Expositors vary in the way they have applied this period, but most have done so in such a manner as to span the centuries from about the time of Justinian, when the pope was declared head over all the churches and corrector of heretics, till the age of Napoleon, when the Papacy lost its temporal power. It was exactly 1260 years after the memorable decree of Justinian (AD 533) that another decree, this time from Napoleon's government, was promulgated, aiming at reducing papal influence in Europe. Five years after the decree of Justinian, the third of the Arian powers opposing papal supremacy received its deathblow. Similarly, five years after the French decree, Berthier of France invaded the Vatican and suspended for a time the papal government, imprisoning the pope.¹⁵

13. *Enduring Until the Judgment* (7:8-10, 24-26). The year 1798 was to bring death to the temporal power of the Papacy. Thus Rev 13:3 speaks of the beast being wounded to death. It has a period of existence when it "is not." But this is not the end of its career. It will ascend from the pit of death and do its most terrible work during the days when the judgment has begun in heaven above (see Rev 17:8). The passages in chapter 7 place the judgment scene between the close of the 1260 years and the coming of Christ (vs. 11-14).

We submit that the specifications given by the prophet are precise and admit of only one

application as we survey the centuries from the breakup of Rome until the present. This is not to deny the final resurgence of antichrist in the future, aided by satanic miracles, and comprising all who refuse to submit to the authority of divine law.¹⁶

No wonder Guinness concluded his argument with the following peroration:

Even the Romanists themselves shame you in their clear-sighted comprehension of the issues of this question. Cardinal Manning says, "*The Catholic Church is either the masterpiece of Satan or the kingdom of the Son of God.*" Cardinal Newman says, "*A sacerdotal order is historically the essence of the Church of Rome; if not divinely appointed, it is doctrinally the essence of antichrist.*" In both these statements the issue is clear, and it is the same. Rome herself admits, openly admits, that *if she is not the very kingdom of Christ, she is that of antichrist.* Rome declares she is *one or the other.* She herself propounds and urges this solemn alternative.

You shrink from it, do you? *I accept it.* Conscience constrains me. History compels me. *The past, the awful past rises before me.* I see THE GREAT APOSTASY, I see the desolation of Christendom, I see the smoking ruins. I see the reign of monsters; I see those *vicegods*, that Gregory VII., that Innocent III., that Boniface VIII., that Alexander VI., that Gregory XIII., that Pius IX.; I see their long succession, I hear their insufferable blasphemies, I see their abominable lives; I see them worshipped by blinded generations, bestowing hollow benedictions, bartering lying indulgences, creating a paganized Christianity; I see their liveried slaves, their slaven priests, their celibate confessors; I see the infamous confessional, the ruined women, the murdered innocents; I hear the lying absolutions, the dying groans; I hear the cries of the victims; I hear the anathemas, the curses, the thunders of the interdicts; I see the racks, the dungeons, the stakes; I see that inhuman Inquisition, those fires of Smithfield, those butcheries of St. Bartholomew, that Spanish armada, those unspeakable dragonnades, that endless train of wars, that dreadful multitude of massacres. *I see it all, and in the name of the ruin it has wrought in the church and in the world, in the name of the truth it has denied, the temple it has defiled, the God it has blasphemed, the souls it has destroyed; in the name of the millions it has deluded, the millions it has slaughtered, the millions it has damned; with holy confessors, with noble reformers, with innumerable martyrs, with the saints of ages, I*

*denounce it as the masterpiece of Satan, as the body and soul and essence of antichrist.*¹⁷

If such a statement causes any reader to do other than tremble for the weakness of his own human nature and to marvel at the deceptiveness of sin, it fails in its purpose. There could be no worse folly and no greater evil than to condemn those who by permission of Providence have been born into a mighty institution which in days gone by imitated its forerunner—the bloody Roman Empire.

Christ says, "And that servant who knew his master's will, but did not make ready or act according to his will, shall receive a severe beating. But he who did not know, and did what deserved a beating, shall receive a light beating. Every one to whom much is given, of him will much be required; and of him to whom men commit much they will demand the more" (Lk 12:47, 48).

We now direct the attention of our readers to a wise statement by Leupold. It acknowledges the bearing of the apotelesmatic principle on the present prophecy and will if heeded help us from looking solely back into history or even at the present with dimmed vision.

There are, indeed, certain features of this prophecy in regard to whose interpretation we must exercise the greatest caution. We agree that the "great horn" mentioned in these verses is the New Testament Antichrist.

We also believe that in this figurative presentation the horn is designed to include all manifestations of the Antichrist that may be expected after Christ's resurrection.

We believe furthermore that, after the analogy of what preceded in the chapter where the beasts represented both kingdoms and kings, the horn represents both the kingdom of the Antichrist as well as a personal Antichrist in whom all previous manifestations shall culminate.

We also hold that in stating that the pope is the Antichrist the Lutheran Confessions were correct much as some men have derided and belittled that view. Such belittling grows out of forgetting how thoroughly the reformers understood the papacy. Present-day shallowness of understanding in this respect leads to shallowness of interpretation.

Though the papacy may be the outstanding manifestation of the Antichrist to date, that does not exclude other possibilities of fulfillment of this passage.¹⁶

The New Testament in 2 Th 2 and Mt 24 supports the warnings of Leupold as it suggests that the close of the age will witness supernatural manifestations of power in support of false religion. Should we put it past Satan himself to counterfeit the very coming of the Lord, or may we expect in his final working the last fulfillment of the antichrist prophecies?

Yet another caution is needed. How foolish it would be to turn from this chapter with the image of antichrist so emblazoned on the imagination that a still more significant image was passed by. We refer to the "son of man" (7:13). This is the title Christ assumed for Himself when proclaiming the gospel. He is not just the Son of Abraham but the Son of man. He is brother to all men. He is representative man—man as God intended him to be, man as saved man will eventually be. The term is used frequently throughout Scripture in contexts calling for vindication. In this chapter it points to the deliverance and exaltation of the humble saints who have been oppressed. They are to be vindicated in the judgment (vs. 13, 14, 22, 26, 27). That vindication will be accomplished by One who Himself has been made as the offscouring of all things but who in lowly humility consents to be the Judge-Advocate of all who seek His intercession.

The contrast between the two dominant

symbols of this chapter should be noted. On the one hand, the little horn points to such spiritual declension as leads mere men to assume the prerogatives of God, seeking to change times and the law and persecuting all who differ. But, the "son of man" points to God Himself, who bowed low to assume humanity, enduring shame and obloquy, and death itself, to convince men of the love of the Deity for His creatures. The first symbol, man making himself God, points to the mystery of iniquity, but the other, God making Himself man, is the mystery of godliness. Martin Luther hit the nail on the head when he affirmed that it is Pope Self we have most cause to fear. The study of the prophetic pages of Daniel should result, not in our recriminations against systems other than our own personal "ism," but in self-distrust and in emulation of Him who humbled Himself for our salvation. If we are to stand through earth's final crisis and its reflection in the judgment above, it will be a result of soul union with the heavenly Son of man. Thus:

It would be well for us to spend a thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ. We should take it point by point, and let the imagination grasp each scene, especially the closing ones. As we thus dwell upon His great sacrifice for us, our confidence in Him will be more constant, our love will be quickened, and we shall be more deeply imbued with His spirit. If we would be saved at last, we must learn the lesson of penitence and humiliation at the foot of the cross.¹⁷

**26¹⁴ "But the court shall sit in judgment,
and his dominion shall be taken away,
to be consumed and destroyed to the end.**

**27 And the kingdom and the dominion
and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven
shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High;
their kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom,
and all dominions shall serve and obey them.'**

28 "Here is the end of the matter. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts

greatly alarmed me, and my color changed, but I kept the matter in my mind."

The first two verses summarize the themes of the preceding chapters. We see the wicked condemned and the righteous vindicated. Compare verse 22: "Judgment was given for the saints of the Most High." The wicked are consumed, but the once-persecuted saints inherit the everlasting kingdom. As each of the narrative chapters had stressed the existence of an overshadowing, personal providence which punished evil and rewarded righteousness, so with the present account. The elevation of Daniel and his fellows in chapters 1 and 2, of the three Hebrews in chapter 3, of the penitent and humbled king in chapter 4, of Daniel again in 5 and 6, so at the climax of this vision of chapter 7 the saints are promoted.

"And the ransomed of the Lord shall return,
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away" (Is 35:10).

The final verse reminds us that "hope which is seen is not hope." Complete fulfillment for human life awaits the consummation of the world to come. Daniel, at first overwhelmed with the prospect of continued trouble for fellow believers, probably received consolation only in the quiet of subsequent meditation as the empathetic prophet recalled the final scene of his vision—a scene of unshadowed triumph for the recipients of grace.

"Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb" (Rev 19:9).

¹ George Willis Botsford, *A History of the Ancient World* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1911), pp. 296, 297.

² With increasing light on eschatology has come a more detailed understanding of the Biblical doctrine of the judgment. Practically all modern exegetes admit that Rev 20 teaches two literal resurrections of the dead separated by one thousand years. Inasmuch as only the "blessed and holy" come up in the first resurrection, a prior judgment is implied. Note the following comments:

"The common idea is, that all men, those that have died, and those who are found living at the time, shall be judged alike, and in one and the same great congregation. It is conceived that the dead will all be simultaneously resurrected, and all the living simultaneously changed, and that only then the

judgment will sit for the adjudication of the eternal destiny of each. Painters and poets have outdone themselves in their efforts to portray the overwhelming majesty and terror of so grand and universal an assize. But it is not according to the plain letter of the Scriptures. . . .

"And even as respects the judgment of 'the dead,' there lurks in the popular idea a mischievous and confusing error. People take the resurrection as a mere preliminary of the judgment and view the judgment itself as something distinct from the resurrection, and coming after it. The language of the last trump they conceive to be: 'Awake, ye dead, and come to judgment.' They consider that the dead are to be awakened for the purpose of being judged. . . .

"The truth is, that the resurrection, and the changes which pass 'in the twinkling of an eye' upon the living, are themselves the fruits and embodiments of antecedent judgment. They are the consequences of adjudications then already made. Strictly speaking, men are neither raised nor translated, in order to come to judgment. Resurrections and translations are products of judgment previously passed, upon the dead as dead, and upon the quick as quick. 'The dead in Christ shall rise first,' because they are already adjudged to be in Christ; and the living saints are caught up together with them to the clouds, because they are already adjudged to be saints, and worthy to attain that world. And the rest of the dead live not again until the thousand years are finished" (J. A. Seiss, *The Apocalypse*, 12th ed., Vol. 1, [Philadelphia School of the Bible, 1865]), pp. 322-326.

"That the believers are not excluded from the judgment Paul shows in II Cor. 5:10, where he declares that we, including himself, must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, and in I Cor. 3:13-17, where he states that the day shall declare and manifest the work of every man who builds on the one foundation which is Christ, and that they shall either receive a reward or suffer loss though they themselves are saved, yet as by fire. Such scriptures place it beyond all doubt, that also the believers shall come into judgment, as is also clear from Jesus' judgment-parables; for instance, Matt. 7:24f.; 24:45f.; 25:14f., etc.

"Now, there are also other texts which represent the believers as appearing in the day of judgment in an entirely different capacity; to wit, not as such as are to be judged, but as such as are to judge. In Matt. 19:28, Jesus promises Peter, that in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, the apostles shall also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (cf. Luke 22:30). Nor is such judging an exclusive privilege of the apostles, but it extends to all believers, as Paul shows, when in I Cor. 6:2, 3, he declares that the saints shall judge the world and that his fellow-believers shall have a share with him in judging angels, and that this ought to be a matter of common Christian awareness and knowledge and ought to reinforce their judiciousness in this life.

"If we lay these two groups of texts side by side, it appears that there will be a definite order in the judgment, since the believers can not very well be imagined to exercise their function in judging Israel, the world, and angels before having themselves received their own judgment. According to I Peter 4:17,

judgment must begin at the house of God, that is, us; and this evidently will be the rule and order not merely in the historical judgments but also in the final judgment. Not only is the fact plain that there will be order in the judgment, but it is also becoming apparent what this order will be. Moreover, in the parable of the two servants, Matt. 24:45f., cf. Luke 12:41f., and that of the talents, Matt. 25:14f., cf. Luke 19:12f., there are suggestions that this first beginning of the judgment will not be just of such as are saved but will separate between the true and faithful servants of the Lord and between such as are in His service merely outwardly and abuse their trust.

"Since the saints shall have a part in the work of judging the Israelitish tribes, the world, and angels, all this judgment and separation between the wise and the foolish virgins, between the good and the slothful servant, and between those who are saved with a reward and those who suffer loss while saved, must be held to precede the judgment of the twelve tribes of Israel, of the world, and of angels in which the saved are to participate as judges" (D. H. Kromminga, *The Millennium*, pp. 85-87).

³Leupold, p. 321.

⁴Taylor, *The Living Bible, Paraphrased* (Wheaton: Tyndale House, 1971). Used by permission.

⁵Joseph Mede—1586-1638 Bishop Newton—1704-1782

Alemans	Huns
Ostrogoths and Lombards	Greeks in Ravenna
Visigoths	Goths
Franks	Franks
Vandals	Alemans
Sueves and Alans	Senate of Rome
Burgundians	Burgundians
Britons	Britons
Saxons	Saxons
Greeks	Lombards

Uriah Smith—1832-1903

Huns	Huns
Ostrogoths	Ravenna
Visigoths	Visigoths
Franks	Franks
Vandals	Vandals and Alans
Suevi	Suevians
Burgundians	Burgundians
Heruli	Alans
Anglo-Saxons	Britons
Lombards	Lombards

E. R. Thiele

AD 351 Alemanni	Germany
AD 351 Franks	France
AD 406 Burgundians	Switzerland
AD 406 Suevi	Portugal
AD 406 Vandals	Africa
AD 408 Visigoths	Spain
AD 449 Saxons	Britain
AD 453 Ostrogoths	Italy
AD 453 Lombards	Italy
AD 476 Heruli	Italy

⁶T. D. Bernard, *The Progress of Doctrine*, pp. 195-198.

⁷H. Gratian Guinness, *Romanism and the Reformation* (Boston: Arnold Publishing Association, 1890), pp. 41-43.

⁸*Translations and Reprints From the Original Sources of European History*, Vol. 3 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 189-), No. 6, p. 21.

⁹Joseph Turnell, *The Latin Church in the Middle Ages*, by André Lagarde (pseudonym) (New York: Scribner, 1915), pp. v, vi.

¹⁰T. R. Burks, *The First Two Visions of Daniel* (London: William Edward Painter, 1843), pp. 248, 249.

¹¹It is clearly set forth in Rev 12:17 to 14:12 that the final test for the world will be in the area of worship and that false religion will enforce a decree reflecting its own claims of authority but contrary to "the commandments of God." Those who resist antichrist at that time are described as worshipping Him "who made heaven and earth, the sea and the fountains of water" (cf. Ex 20:11 with Rev 14:7).

¹²Alexander Campbell, "Address to the Readers of *The Christian Baptist*, No. III," *The Christian Baptist*, February 2, 1824, p. 1.

¹³"Either the law remains in all its force, to the utmost extent of its literal requirements, or it is passed away with the Jewish ceremonies. If it yet exist, let us observe it according to law. And if it does not exist, let us abandon a mock observance of another day for it."

¹⁴"But," say some, "it was changed from the seventh to the first day." Where? when? and by whom? No man can tell. No, it never was changed, nor could it be, unless creation was to be gone through again: for the reason assigned must be changed before the observance, or respect to the reason, can be changed!! It is all old wives' fables to talk of the change of the sabbath from the seventh to the first day. If it be changed, it was that august personage changed it who changes times and laws *ex officio*—I think his name is DOCTOR ANTICHRIST. . . .

¹⁵"The sabbath was, by the Lord of the sabbath, set aside, as well as every other part of the law of Moses."

¹⁶Stephen Koenan, *A Doctrinal Catechism*, 3rd American ed., rev. (New York: P. J. Kenedy, 1876), p. 174.

¹⁷Peter Geiermann, C. SS. R., *The Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine*, 1957 ed. (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1930), p. 30.

¹⁸"First and foremost, all sharp divisions in history are obviously artificial. Nothing ends and nothing begins absolutely. There is something absurd in setting hard and fast limits to a period by dates. Whether it be a revolution or a death, no event breaks all the threads connecting it with the past or the future. . . . Do the Middle Ages begin in 395 with the partitioning of the Empire? Or in 406 with the onslaught of the Huns and the Germanic reflux? Or in 476 with the death of Romulus Augustulus? Or between 630 and 730, with the Moslem

invasions? And when do they end? In 1453, with the fall of the Eastern Empire? Yet some people give as their limit the invention of printing (1440?) or the discovery of America (1492). . . . As for particular histories, not only do they tend, as we have indicated above, to adopt other dates than general history, dates which vary from one to the other, but they themselves hesitate as to their own divisions" (Henri Berr, in Preface to Lot's *The End of the Ancient World and the Beginnings of the Middle Ages* [New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1961], pp. xlix, l).

¹⁶ See Bunch's delineation of sixteen characteristics of the little horn. We have followed his listing in part.

¹⁷ Guinness, *Romanism and the Reformation*, pp. 258-260; emphasis supplied.

¹⁸ Leupold, pp. 322, 323.

¹⁹ White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 83.

Preface to Daniel 8

This is in many ways the unique chapter of Daniel. Note the points which indicate its vital importance.

First, *its theme is the redemption of the people of God*. It is from this chapter (vs. 13, 14), and from its later parallels (10:11-21; 12:6, 7), that the New Testament drew its observation that "angels desire to look into" the matters of our salvation, such as Christ's sufferings "and the glory that should follow."¹ The scene of angels looking into the meaning of this prophecy (v. 13) is an encouragement for men to inquire regarding it and not to rest until they obtain an understanding of it. There is no other passage in Scripture besides chapter 8 and its parallels that so emphasizes the interest of the heavenly hosts in the plan of salvation. Thus the interpretative comment from Peter gives us the essence of the prophecy of this chapter—it concerns "salvation," the glory that follows Christ's sufferings, and that gospel which has been preached "with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." It is not pressing the New Testament commentary too hard to observe that Peter under inspiration recognized that Dan 8 includes in its theme "the revelation [coming] of Jesus Christ" (1 Pe 1:13).

Second, *it was the Son of God Himself who came down to give light on the meaning of the*

vision. Calvin, Wordsworth, and other scholars have affirmed that the "angel" who gave the message of verse 14 concerning the "cleansing" of the sanctuary was none other than the Second Person of the Godhead. Even stronger is the evidence that the One who commanded Gabriel to give Daniel understanding was our Lord (8:15). Wordsworth says (on v. 15): "Probably the great angel mentioned in v. 13 [was] . . . no other than the Son of God. . . . No other person than God would give a command to the Archangel Gabriel."² And Keil comments: "The being whose voice Daniel heard appears as if hovering over the waters of the river Ulai. This conjecture is confirmed by ch. xii. 6, 7, where Daniel sees a man hovering over the waters of the river of Ulai, who by the majesty of his appearance and his words shows himself to be a divine being."³ How vital must be the information that Christ Himself came to communicate!

For the first time we read of "the time of the end." The phrase will be repeated several times in the rest of the book. On the word of Christ Himself this vision "relates to the crisis at the close" (8:17, Moffatt). The Hebrew term *end* (*qes*) has its primary use in this chapter but occurs more than a dozen times from this point onward. In the Olivet discourse the equivalent term is found in Mt 24:3,

6, 13, 14. No wonder scholars affirm that Christ's sermon on the end of the world has "a Danielic ring." As we shall shortly notice, *it is from Dan 8 in particular that Christ's instructions regarding the last days are drawn*—Dan 8 and its subsequent expansions in the rest of the book. R. H. Charles assures us that the expression "the time of the end" "is always used eschatologically in our author and refers definitely to the advent of the kingdom."⁴ Thus as we study Daniel we are studying concerning the matters that most concern the times in which we live, if all the other "signs of the times" have been recognized aright.

Also, for the first time in Daniel, the chapter closes with the statement that neither Daniel nor anyone else could understand the revelation just given him. But 12:4, 9, 10, assures us that in the last days "knowledge shall increase" and the visions that have been "shut up" (8:26, KJV) will be unsealed, so that the "wise shall understand." Thus, if these indeed are the last days, *we have every right to expect light on this eighth chapter beyond all that other generations have received.* Evidently, then, we must not expect to find all that God has for us on this chapter in the commentaries of former times. Indeed, if knowledge is now to be increased on this prophecy, previous expositions will be exposed as falling apart. Only in "the time of the end" would the book be unsealed.

Part of the "how" of this further light is hinted at in the chapter itself, though most have failed to recognize the significance of the divine clue. Christ admonished Gabriel, "Make this man understand the vision," which commission the angel began immediately to fulfill. But his task was not complete at the time Daniel fainted, as verse 27 clearly shows: "I was appalled by the vision and did not understand it." Therefore we are to look upon the rest of the book (which consists chiefly of the words of Gabriel—another fact rarely observed) as commentary upon this chapter and as fulfilling the commission of Christ to Gabriel.⁵

It is this truth which explains how it is that the "time of the end" brings the unsealing of the book. It was not until the nineteenth century that scholars in many parts of the world simultaneously came to the conclusion that 9:24-27 was a

continuing explanation of chapter 8. Even slower for many has been the awareness that chapters 10-12 are but the completion of that explanation.⁶

After Gabriel's expansion of the meaning of the vision of chapter 8, there were still some matters that Daniel did not understand (12:8). But even these are to be unveiled to "those who are wise" in "the time of the end" in order that they might be enabled to "turn many to righteousness" (12:10, 3, 4).

In summary on this point: We should in our day understand better the meaning of chapter 8 than others have at any previous period of history. We should know very much more about it than Daniel did twenty-five hundred years ago, much more than did the Christians of Christ's day, more than the prophetic students a century ago, yes, more than we personally did when we first were led to give it attention.

The next point indicating the vital importance of chapter 8 is the fact that *it was specifically to this prophecy and its expansions in later chapters that Christ pointed in the days of His flesh.* Addressing those who would live in the last generation, He admonished concerning Daniel's predictions of the desolating power: "Let the reader understand" (Mt 24:15). He said that about no other prophecy. Christians today who wish to obey their Lord in all things should be seeking diligently to fathom the depths of this special prediction given for those living in "the time of the end."

The enlargements of 8:10-13 found in 9:25-27; 11:14-45; and 12:11, 12 constitute the climactic presentations of Daniel's theme. Therefore any adequate interpretation of the book as a whole must be the result of successful wrestling with the problems of this chapter.

Also similar in significance is the striking truth that *in 8:14 we reach the climax of the symbolical representations of the book* (see pages 28, 29). Hereafter, all is in literal language without any use whatsoever of visionary (apocalyptic) symbolism. This is why it is that immediately following 8:14 we have Christ's admonition to Gabriel to "make this man understand." The interpretation begun in 8:17 continues till the end of the book.⁷ Thus it is shown that chapter 8 is the seed of chapters 9-12, as well as the symbolic summary of all chapters

preceding it. This marks chapter 8 as in many respects the most important part of the book.

*Not only is chapter 8 the seed of chapters 9-12, but it is also the seed from which all New Testament eschatology flowers.*⁸ The most important chapters on eschatology in the New Testament are Mt 24 (also Lk 21; Mk 13), 2 Th 2, and the whole Book of Revelation. The following chart shows how all these latter New Testament sections are but the development of the vision of chapter 8.

<i>The Power</i>	<i>The Place</i>	<i>The Desecration</i>
<i>Dan 8:13</i> "The transgression that makes desolate"	Sanctuary	"Trampled under foot"
<i>Mt 24:15</i> "The desolating sacrifice"	"The holy place"	"Standing in"
<i>2 Th 2:3, 4</i> "The man of lawlessness, . . . the son of perdition"	"The temple of God"	"Takes his seat in"
<i>Rev 11:2</i> The nations	"The holy city"	"Trample over"

It should not be considered that what we have here is merely a literary usage or a reapplication. Christ asserted of the work of antichrist at the end of the world that it would fulfill the very word of Daniel regarding "the abomination of desolation."⁹ Similarly when Paul spoke of the antichrist he referred to him as "that man of sin" (KJV)—i.e., the very one they had read about in Daniel.

*Finally, chapter 8 is of vital importance because of its possession of the key verse of the book—occurring right in the heart of this chapter: "And he said to him, 'For two thousand and three hundred evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state'" (8:14). This verse is the only one in the book to actually use the Hebrew term *nišdaq* (the niph'al form of *šadaq*), which scholars generally associate with vindication—the chief theme of*

Daniel. The Hebrew words for judgment and righteousness are closely related. The meaning of the name *Daniel* embraces the meaning of the verb in 8:14; and the verb itself embraces the denouement of every narrative and vision of the book. (See sections on "The Theme of Daniel" and "Literary Structure of the Book" for discussions of this aspect.)

Because in Daniel the sanctuary is a symbol of the kingdom of God on earth,¹⁰ the symbolism here used unites both the histories and the prophecies of this book and sets forth the truth that the holy things of God which have been profaned through the ages by unbelieving powers are soon to be vindicated in the judgment, and likewise the holy ones—the worshipers. In view of the apparent crumbling of God's visible kingdom on earth as indicated by the treading underfoot of the sanctuary by profane powers, this prophecy foretells the vindication of truth and its believers and the final establishment of God's eternal kingdom. An integral part of this theme is the destruction of wicked powers, and thus their prominence in each vision.

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that 8:14 summarizes the themes of the entire book and points to the great denouement, the ushering in of the divine kingdom by the judgment, which first vindicates those who hitherto have been oppressed and despised. All the chapters of Daniel point to the need for this intervention from heaven.

Having stressed the importance of the chapter as a whole (and verses 10-14 in particular), by way of summary—though with expansion of some details—we list the features designed to emphasize the importance of the climactic verse of the passage, verse 14.

1. Its very phrasing is exceedingly enigmatic and attention-raising.

2. It includes a reference to the longest chronological period in the Bible stated in days.

3. The Hebrew verb (the Niph'al form of *šadaq*) in this verse is unique, occurring in this form only once in Holy Writ.

4. The reference to the sanctuary unites the visions to the narrative portions of the book where already the sanctuary has been mentioned, thus making a unity of the whole by this verbal clasp.

Especially is this the case considering that the verb *vindicated* suggests the answer to the question posed by every preceding chapter—"Why should God's people be treated so harshly by the wicked, without Yahweh's intervention?"

5. The "vindication," "restoration," "cleansing," of the sanctuary, or temple, is said by several independent scholars to parallel the climaxes of the preceding chapter (v. 27, where the saints are vindicated and receive the kingdom); the following one (where the sanctuary is prominent both with reference to its anointing and atonement for iniquity, as well as the divine judgment on the desolating prince who threatens the sanctuary); and the last chapter (where the description of punishment and awards in the eschatological kingdom is listed [see 12:1-3, 13]).¹¹

6. This emphasis on the sanctuary links not only with parallel passages in Daniel regarding the ushering in of the kingdom of heaven but also with the New Testament teachings regarding Christ's kingdom under the figure of the "new temple." Many recent scholars have shown the relationship between the concept of vindicating the temple and the eschatological establishment of the new temple—the Messianic reign—by the Son of man. All scholars concur that the chief symbol of vindication throughout the Old and New Testaments is the one from Daniel that was quoted by Christ more than eighty times—"the Son of man." Says Gaston, "The concept of Son of Man is parallel to the new temple which Jesus builds." And in another place, speaking similarly: "The concept of Son of Man in Daniel is very close to that of the kingdom of God."¹² Beasley-Murray in his commentary on Mk 13 has shown that the use of "Son of man" is to express ultimate vindication of the ravaged sanctuary by Christ's return to establish the saints as a glorified community—a new temple. And in his *Jesus and the Future*, he writes:

Joachim Jeremias has spoken of "the age-old conception that a new reign commences with a newly consecrated temple": Mark 13:2 must be placed alongside Mark 14:58; Acts 6:14.¹³

Others have stated:

We find in Daniel a combination of "the saints of the Most High" and the idea of the "new temple" which is to be established in the last days. On the subject of the evil to come it is said that one of the "horns" of the "he-goat" shall . . . defile the temple. . . . But the good to come also stands related to the temple; atonement shall be made for the evils of the people and eternal righteousness shall be established, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place. . . . The vision of the future has sometimes been interpreted in spiritual categories, the implication being that "the saints" make up a new temple, a spiritual temple. It is the kingdom of "the saints" which is called an anointed sanctuary upon which rests the presence of God (vii:13, 14). . . . It is important to note that the concept of the "anointed sanctuary" is connected with the ideas of the Son of Man and the "saints of the most High."¹⁴

The sanctuary of Dn 8:14 and 9:24 should be interpreted figuratively in terms of the holy community.¹⁵

Particularly note how Matthew Black equates the "Son of Man" with the concept of the judgment:

The old Biblical *Son of Man* apocalyptic has not, therefore, been foisted upon the teaching of Jesus by later tradition; it represents the substance of His teaching about the coming Judgment (italics supplied).¹⁶

C. F. D. Moule on "Son of man" says:

This vindication-theme attaches to it more readily than any distinctively redemptive associations.¹⁷

In view of the idea of vindication in 8:14 and the fact that "Son of man" in the preceding chapter also represents vindication—the promises regarding the kingdom of God couched in the imagery of a new (cleansed, restored, vindicated) temple—it is not strange that some scholars have seen that 8:14 symbolically presents the same judgment pictured in 7:9-13. Thus Gaston writes:

The strange statement of 8:14 "the sanctuary will be justified . . ." will then refer to "the many" who are "justified."

If for the individual martyr it is enough to say that

he will be vindicated after his death at the last judgment, for the persecuted church more is necessary: that this vindication come now. The use of the term Son of Man in this connection refers not so much to the parousia of Jesus as it does to the last judgment as the vindication of his persecuted followers.¹⁸

In essence, then, it is true to say that chapter 8—particularly verses 10-14—is unique; given by Christ Himself in theophany; its study urged by Him in the flesh centuries later, constituting the seed of the rest of the book and of all New Testament eschatology; the unifying clasp of the narratives and visions of this Old Testament apocalypse as well as its symbolic climax; pertaining to the “time of the end” that is to witness the divine vindication of His people in judgment on the eve of the establishment of the kingdom of glory. What an encouragement for close, prayerful, unprejudiced examination! No wonder the New Testament tells us that angels themselves have desired to understand its meaning. How vacuous these facts render all interpretations limiting the chapter to the days of Antiochus Epiphanes.¹⁹

Three main questions call for answers before we attend to the minutiae of the chapter. The answer given to each paves the way for the next.

1. What is the terminus for the events of this chapter?
2. Who or what is portrayed by the little horn?
3. What is meant by the cleansing, vindication, restoration, of the sanctuary?

The Terminus of Daniel 8

This issue, of course, has already been largely settled. If it is true, and it is, that Christ affirmed the desolating power of this and later chapters to be antichrist, then chapter 8, as with the other prophetic outlines of the book, extends to the advent of the kingdom of glory. All Scripture testifies that antichrist is destroyed only at the end of time. Furthermore, Paul in 2 Thessalonians and John in Revelation likewise apply the Dan 8 description of the little horn to antichrist, giving additional confirmation of the eschatological terminus.

Also, if Christ saw future events fulfilling the

prophecies of 8:10-13; 9:27; 11:31, 32; 12:11, 12, then our second question regarding the nature of the little horn is also solved and on the very best authority.

The objective is to discover Christ's own thinking about this chapter. We have already shown how the Olivet discourse is a commentary upon the prophetic passages of Daniel. Now we wish to be more specific and inquire regarding His meaning in Mt 24:15, Mk 13:14, and Lk 21:24. Here are Christ's words: "But when you see the desolating sacrilege set up where it ought not to be (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains" (Mk 13:14).

Note that Christ's words paraphrase Dan 8:13; 9:27; 11:31; 12:11, 12. These words appear in a discourse that all agree foretells the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 and also the subsequent end of the world.

In harmony with this twofold application of the chapter is Christ's use of this term from Daniel, "the abomination of desolation," as it is translated in the King James Version.

Christ's views on eschatology sprang, in part at least, from the Book of Daniel. Here mention was made repeatedly of a power arising near the end of time to pollute the holy things and devastate the holy ones. The blasphemies and aggression associated by many with the Syrian king are applied by Christ in this discourse to a power soon to attack Jerusalem and precipitate a time of tribulation not only for the Jews as a nation but for all Christians everywhere. As Swete²⁰ and others have noted, Rome takes the place of Syria.

In this sense we believe the abomination of desolation of the Olivet discourse is antichrist, but an antichrist whose work takes place in history despite the fact that its culminating savagery is accompanied by the supernatural "fireworks," or miraculous signs attending the end of the age. Christ's presentation of the end consists of a complex of events. The finale is attenuated. Thus it is that the "*bdelugma tēs erēmōseōs*" (abomination of desolation) is a comprehensive term applying first to the armies of Rome, but including later manifestations of antichrist.²¹

In Christ's day there already existed the understanding that "a great and desolating war"

would "herald the coming of the kingdom and that it . . . [would] be directed against Jerusalem and its Temple." This idea, says Rowley, "was doubtless derived from the Gog passages of the Book of Ezekiel and from the Book of Daniel."²² And it is this concept that Christ adopts. He says in effect, "What the idolatrous Babylonians and Syrians did in ages past is to be repeated by another heathen power. The emperor of Rome will set on foot a similar fateful sequence of events as did Nebuchadnezzar and Antiochus IV of old."

Now for the text itself. "These words of Jesus have fascinated mankind for all generations," says van Dodewaard.²³ Certainly, they are central, even pivotal, to the eschatological address.²⁴ They point to a crisis²⁵ for the disciples, Judaism, and the world. The event in question, whatever it is, signals the commencement of the time of trouble such as never was. "Almost every word causes difficulties."²⁶

The verse seethes with obscurity—or is it that the phraseology is purposely chosen in order to accomplish its purpose of riveting attention? The grammatical anomaly found in *hesēkota*, the vagueness of *hopou ou dei*, the admonition *noeitō*, and what Vincent Taylor refers to as "the general atmosphere of reserve which marks the passage"²⁷—all betoken not only mystery but importance.

A brief review of the context of this verse is in order. It occurs in the heart of a chapter that itself is the central chapter of five climactic ones in the Gospel, each of which refers to the temple. Chapter 13 succeeds the implied threat of the parable of the vineyard—the "owner of the vineyard" would "come and destroy the tenants, and give the vineyard to others." The same chapter that records this threat also paints in lurid colors the hypocrisy of the religious leaders of Israel, particularly as it was manifested in holy places. They were guilty of seeking the best seats in the synagogues and of making long prayers and pretentious offerings despite oppression of the needy. Their conduct evoked warning and woes from the Lord of the temple. All this in the chapter preceding the Olivet discourse was itself a continuation of what is found in chapter 11, where the temple is cleansed and the fig-tree symbol of

the judgment-bound nation is described graphically. There we read of the fig tree and, of course, of Israel: "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." So much for the literary context.

Thus Mk 13:14 occurs in a passage that, in both its literary and historical contexts, is climactic. Even the pictured geographical setting—the view of the rejected temple and city from the opposite hill—is pertinent to the significance of the discourse. The latter is presented as flowing naturally from the immediately preceding events. After the disciples have heard Christ's woes and His prediction that the temple would be left desolate and its hypocritical worshipers be denied a view of Him till they acknowledged the returning Messiah—it is then that the fate of the temple is further discussed.

And Mk 13:14 not only occurs in a climactic passage but is itself a *crescendo*, as Lambrecht has shown.²⁸ The same *hotan* that begins verse 14 occurs also in verses 7 and 11. In the latter two cases the word is associated with prohibitions: "Do not be alarmed," "Be not troubled." But in verse 14 we have a positive instruction—"Flee!" Similarly, to see is more than to hear, and lastly *then* comes climactically in verse 14 alone. It is not found in verses 7 and 11. It signifies the time for action, long awaited.

These facts indicate that verse 14 is indeed the answer to the specific request of the disciples for a sign of the coming destruction of the temple and the end of the age. It is clear that the mysterious abomination of desolation must be something very specific, for it constitutes a signal, and a signal of no mean importance. Thousands await it. Upon its recognition depend the lives of multitudes. C. C. Torrey's arguments for the necessity of the sign being obvious are entirely sound. He says:

The sign, unlike all the others in the chapter, was one to be acted on immediately. On what impulse do companies of men "flee to the mountains" in wild haste, leaving even their outer garments behind? Not because of some obscure, mystifying phrase, nor because of any happening which may or may not be portentous.²⁹

In harmony with this reasoning is the presence of the article with "abomination" in contrast to the

anarthrous state of the signs in verses 7 and 8. Whatever the abomination of desolation is, its significance must be apparent to those who anticipate its coming. It is no mere abstraction or idealistic portrayal. It is concrete, menacing, and stirring. Time is of the essence, for nothing is to be taken from the houses. Lives are endangered. It is no longer safe to stay in the city or to seek it as a place of refuge. "Seek rather the shelter of the hill country," is Christ's admonition.

So far, we have looked at the crescendo nature of verse 14 indicated by "when you see" and "flee." The evidence for this is intensified by the "but." It must be given its full adversative force. A note of contrast is thereby sounded. Christ has admonished the disciples that neither false Christs nor wars and rumors of wars, or even persecutions, are the main sign to be awaited. Having said so, He now utters His "but when" (*hotan de*), or its Aramaic equivalent. In effect He says, "But here now is the real thing, the crucial event." This *hotan de* begins a section that closes as it began, with another sign, that of the appearance of the Son of man coming in clouds with great power and glory. *These two signs constitute the heart of the chapter, and one answers to the other.*

The time references in verse 14 have light cast upon them by the reference to "end" in the preceding verse, and also in Mt 24:14. In Mark the meaning of the term is open to dispute, though Dalman has asserted that it is the equivalent of the Hebrew "till the end" in Dan 12:13 (KJV), and Schniewind regards it as an idiom for the last day. Inasmuch as the chapter as a whole regards the advent and the crisis at Jerusalem as taking place in the same generation, there is little need to distinguish between the two possible meanings for *telos*.³⁰

Some scholars believe that the concept of the end here includes both the end of mankind as well as the martyr's end after patient endurance.³¹ There can be no disputing, however, regarding the meaning of *telos* in Mt 24:14. Here it is obviously eschatological. This conjunction of *telos* with the reference to the abomination of desolation is another indication that Mk 13:14 is climactic, pointing to the final act of the drama.

Commentators without number—English,

French, German, Dutch, and others—have pointed out that the wording of the passage from verse 14 forward is "much too emphatic for a siege." Vincent Taylor, for example, says:

It is clear that the thought of 19 is eschatological. This is undoubtedly true of 20. Here the idea found in many apocalyptic writings, that in His mercy and for the sake of the elect God has shortened the period of tribulation for mankind, . . . is strongly expressed. Cf. Daniel xii. 7, 1 Enoch lxxx. 2, 4 Ezra iv. 26.³²

In other words, not only does Christ foresee the invading Roman armies besieging Jerusalem to trample down the temple area and the city, but He sees an eschatological threat just prior to the final climactic time of trouble that will climax in His return to this world. When Lk 21:24 paraphrases Christ's words of Mk 13:14, it also quotes directly from Dan 8:13 and speaks of Gentile powers having their way till the end of the world. Anyone reading Mt 24:15f. and Mk 13:14f. cannot but see that Christ speaks of much more than AD 70. The second half of the apostles' question (Mt 24:3) is in His mind all the time. Thus we have the oddity in Mk 13:14 often referred to by expositors of a masculine verb *heset* *ekkota* associated with a neuter subject *bdelugma*—a phenomenon interpreted by almost all as signifying the final antichrist.

Not least to be numbered among those who apparently viewed Mk 13:14 as applying to the antichrist are the apostles Paul and John. 1 and 2 Thessalonians draw heavily upon the eschatological discourse recorded in Mk 13,³³ and it is just as clear that the writer of the last canonical apocalypse likewise drew from that source for his verbal pictures in chapters 11, 13, 17.

Modern writers who apply Mk 13:14 and Mt 24:15 to the final manifestation of antichrist as well as to pagan Rome are legion.³⁴

The evidence to date amounts to this fact—Christ interpreted Dan 8, as well as later chapters of Daniel, as extending until the end of the world. He views the little horn as including pagan Rome and later manifestations of antichrist culminating in the final spiritistic phenomena of "signs and wonders" that will lead to apostasy in the church and a time of tribulation such as never was. In the Olivet discourse His own return as the

Son of man is pictured as the counterpart of the final manifestation of the abomination of desolation. He comes to vindicate His own who have been threatened with martyrdom.³⁵ This is what accomplishes the breaking "without hand" of the little horn in 8:25 (KJV).

Let us now ask, What is the evidence from the Old Testament itself that chapter 8 extends until the end of time?

1. *The chapter is apocalyptic and therefore eschatological.* The very purpose of apocalyptic was to point to the end time. We have already pointed out the frequency of the word *end* in Daniel from this chapter onward.

The fantastic imagery of a little horn growing to the sky and raking down the stars is apocalyptic par excellence. This is not the sober language characterizing ordinary prophecy. The apocalyptic nature of the chapter automatically calls for not only an eschatological interpretation but one that extends beyond national boundaries. Apocalyptic is cosmic in its scope, and its terminus is the kingdom of God in glory.

Similar examples to chapter 8 can be found in the apocalyptic sections of Joel, Zephaniah, and Isaiah. Joel's description of a locust plague upon Judah broadens out into a description of the judgment of the whole world, and Zephaniah's foretelling of a local "day of the Lord" swells into the scene of a universal punishment. Isaiah, too, can swiftly pass from the temporal devastation of the nation to the catastrophic destruction of the face of the earth (Is 14:24-27). In our present chapter the things of the sanctuary and of literal Israel symbolize the kingdom of God and the believing host. Rev 12 draws from this passage to portray the great controversy between Christ and Satan beginning in heaven and extending till Satan's defeat in his final war on the remnant (cf. Rev 12:4 with Dan 8:10).³⁶

2. *Chapter 8 parallels its predecessor, chapter 7, and therefore has the same terminus—the ushering in of the kingdom of God.* Only the point of commencement differs, and that because the last days of Babylon were approaching.³⁷

Daniel 7

Babylon	the lion
Medo-Persia	the bear
Greece	the leopard
Rome	nondescript beast
antichrist	little horn
Judgment and kingdom of heaven	
Beast given to the burning flames	

Daniel 8

Medo-Persia	the ram
Greece	the he-goat
Rome, pagan and papal,	little horn
forms of antichrist	
"Then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" (KJV)	
Horn broken without hand.	

The same parallelism indicating the relationship between the coming of the Son of man, the vindicating of the sanctuary, and the arrival of the kingdom of God can be set out as follows:

Daniel 7

Persecuting powers symbolized by
beasts
Climactic aggression by little horn
Judgment and coming of the Son of
man
(Judgment is given for the saints,
and they receive the kingdom. The same
judgment takes away the dominion of
the little horn, and it is destroyed.)

Daniel 8

Persecuting powers symbolized by
beasts
Climactic aggression by little horn
The vindication of the sanctuary

(The little horn is broken without
human hand. The vision reaches to
the time of the end.)

The little horns differ chiefly at their point and time of origin, but thereafter they too parallel each other. Let us notice their similarities:

Daniel 7

"Seemed greater than its fellows" (20).
Speaks "words against the Most High" (25).
Thinks "to change the times and the law" (25).
Triumphant for "a time, two times, and half a time" (25).
"He . . . shall wear out the saints" (25).
"His dominion shall be taken away" (26).

In both instances the little horn represents the last persecutor of history. In both instances its overwhelming triumph precipitates its own destruction. In both cases its warfare is against the cult of Yahweh in particular. In one case it is given the name *transgression of desolation* (*pesha' shomem*), which links it with the abomination of desolation (*shiqqûs shomen*) of the later chapters and the *bdelugma tēs erēmōseōs* of the Synoptic Gospels. "The phrase 'abomination of desolation,' or the like, is found in 8:13; 9:27; 11:31; 12:11, where the reference is doubtless the same, binding the chapters together once more in their point of climax."³⁰ Jeffery, in discussing the first of these verses, affirms similarly.

It should be observed that according to 1 Jn 2:18, antichrist is a genus as well as a specific power. Satan himself is the chief antichrist as Rev 12 makes clear. Scripture presents an unbroken

Daniel 8

"Gabriel, make this man understand the vision" (16).

"The place of his sanctuary was overthrown" (11).

"through transgression" (12).

Daniel 8

"Grew exceedingly great" (9).
Magnifies himself (11, 25).
Took away the continual burnt offering (11).
Triumphant for "two thousand and three hundred evenings and mornings" (14).
"He shall destroy many" (25).
"He shall be broken" (25).

line of history for this intensified opposition to Christ and His church from the days of pagan Rome until the end.

The parallelism illustrated above is strengthened by the allusion in 8:25 (KJV), "broken without hand," to 2:44, 45 (KJV), the stone cut out "without hand," which destroys all God-opposing powers immediately prior to the setting up of the divine kingdom. Many commentators also see a parallel between 8:24 and 9:27 that speaks not only of the consummation but of the judgment determined and poured out "on the desolator."

3. Chapter 8 parallels not only the prophetic chapters 2 and 7, which precede it, but the following prophetic chapters, also terminating in the kingdom of God.³¹

The following demonstrates the parallels between 8 and 9; and also 8 and 10-12:

Daniel 9

"Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the first. . . . And he said, . . . 'I have now come out to give you . . . understanding. . . . I have come to tell it to you; . . . therefore consider the word and understand the vision' " (21-23).

"shall destroy . . . the sanctuary" (26).

"to finish the transgression" (24).

"the transgression that makes desolate" (13).

"Then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state" (14).

"the Prince of the host" (11).

"a king of bold countenance" (23).

"The vision is for the time of *the end*" (17).

"the appointed time of the end" (19).

"destroy mighty men and the people of the saints" (24).

"the continual burnt offering . . . taken away" (11).

"By no human hand, he shall be broken" (25).

"the giving over of the sanctuary and host to be trampled under foot . . . 'for two thousand and three hundred evenings and mornings'" (13, 14).

"He shall even rise up against the Prince of princes" (25).

The significance of these parallels⁴⁰ will be rapidly appreciated if summaries are compared:

Daniel 8

"He shall even rise up against the Prince of princes" (25), . . . "and the place of his sanctuary was overthrown" (11), . . . giving over of the sanctuary and host to be trampled under foot" (13) . . . "for two thousand and three

"Upon the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate" (27).

"to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, . . . and to anoint a most holy place" (24).

"an anointed one, a prince" (25).

"the prince who is to come" (26).

"to *the end*" (26).

"until the decreed end" (27).

"shall destroy the city and the sanctuary" (26).

"sacrifice and offering to cease" (27).

"The decreed end is poured out on the desolator" (27).

"To the end there shall be war: desolations are decreed" (26).

"An anointed one shall be cut off" (26).

Daniel 9

"An anointed one shall be cut off; . . . and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. . . . To the end there shall be war; desolations are decreed," (26) . . .

hundred evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state" (14).

Not only does 9:24-27 purport to explain the vision of chapter 8, but so also does the final outline of events found in chapters 10-12. This closing section is similar in literary form to chapter 9. Whereas chapters 2, 7, and 8 present a series of symbols followed by explanation, this is no longer the case in chapters 9-12. *After 8:14, symbolism*

Daniel 8

"I was at the river Ulai" (2).

"I raised my eyes and saw, and behold" (3).

"He did as he pleased" (4).

"magnified himself" (4).

"but when he was strong, the great horn was broken, and instead of it there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven" (8).

"Out of one of them came forth a little horn, which grew exceedingly great" (9).

"toward the glorious land" (9).

"The continual burnt offering was taken away" (11).

"and the place of his sanctuary was overthrown" (11).

"For how long is the vision?" (13).

"to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness . . . and to anoint a most holy place" (24).

requiring interpretation ceases, and everything is now of the nature of explanation itself. This is in harmony with the division previously commented upon, whereby the stress on beasts, horns, and other symbols is succeeded by straightforward commentary. A comparison between 8 and 10-12 follows:

Daniel 10-12

"I was standing on the bank of the great river" (10:4).

"I lifted up my eyes and looked and behold" (10:5).

"A mighty king shall . . . do according to his will" (11:3).

"He shall . . . magnify himself" (11:36).

"And when he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken and divided toward the four winds of heaven" (11:4).

"He shall become strong with a small people" (11:23).

"the glorious land" (11:16; see also 41, 45).

"shall take away the continual burnt offering" (11:31; cf. 12:11).

"and profane the temple" (11:31).

"How long shall it be till the end of these wonders?" (12:6).

"the transgression that makes desolate" (13).

"And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai" (16).

"The vision is for the time of the end" (17; cf. 19).

"As he was speaking to me, I fell into a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me and set me on my feet" (18).

"the latter end of the indignation" (19).

"The vision . . . is true" (26).

"He shall be broken" (25).

"And he said to him, 'For two thousand and three hundred evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state'" (14).

4. *Similar to the foregoing and growing out of it is the fact that 8:14 and 12:13 are parallel passages.* Inasmuch as 9:24-27 and chapters 10-12 are the fulfillment of Christ's command to Gabriel to make Daniel understand the vision of chapter 8 (see 8:17), we might expect that the last portion of this explanation would comment on the last part of the vision—that is, we might expect a close relationship between 12:13 and 8:14.

This expectation is confirmed by the reference to "the days" in 12:13, referring back to the many days of 8:14 (see 8:26). It is further confirmed by

"the abomination that makes desolate" (11:31).

"The man clothed in linen, who was above the waters; . . . and I heard him" (12:7).

"until the time of the end" (11:35; cf. 11:40 and 12:4).

"Then I heard the sound of his words; and when I heard the sound of his words, I fell on my face in a deep sleep with my face to the ground. And behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees" (10:9, 10).

"till the indignation is accomplished" (11:36).

"The word was true" (10:1).

"He shall come to his end" (11:45).

"Your people shall be delivered. . . . And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament . . . for ever and ever" (12:1-3; see also 12:13, which makes reference to "the end of the days" and Daniel's reward in the judgment).

the references to "the time of the end" in chapter 12, which parallel the same statement in 8:17. Thus Daniel is told to go his way "till the end," that same "end" to which the 2300 days extend. And what then? Some Bibles have in the margin of 12:13 a reference to Ps 1:5, which reads: "Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." Zöckler comments:

The meaning is, . . . that thou mayest receive thy portion of the inheritance at the judgment of eternal recompense; cf. chap. vii. 18, 27; Rev xx. 6. The

thought refers back undeniably to vs. 2, 3, hence to the Messianic recompense, of which Daniel also should partake, and a majority of interpreters recognize that fact.⁴¹

Even a hurried glance down the passages listed under "lot" in a concordance shows that its chief reference is to the allocation of an inheritance. Gesenius says of the Hebrew noun for "lot":

What falls to any one by lot, especially part of an inheritance. . . . Metaph[orically] used of the lots assigned by God to men (Ps 16:5; Dan 12:13).⁴²

Therefore chapter 8, and particularly verse 14, extends to the same point in time as chapter 12 of Daniel, namely the judgment and the kingdom of glory.

5. 8:13 echoes an eschatological motif that is common to both the Old and the New Testaments. The cry "How long?" is not isolated to Dan 8. It occurs in Ps 6; 13; 35; 89; 94; Hab 1; Zec 1; and Rev 6.

All commentators recognize these passages as pleas for divine intervention, judgment, and vindication. The same theme is expounded by Christ in Lk 18:2-8, and the time context of the parable parallels the timing in Dan 8:13-17 and Rev 6:9-11.

The use of the Hebrew verb for "vindicate" in 8:14 confirms this understanding of the "How long?" plea of verse 13. In Old Testament thought, "to judge" and "to vindicate" are equivalent terms. Such judgment showed not so much who was righteous but who was in the right. Thus the cleansing of the sanctuary or its vindication represents the same as the granting of vindication to the widow (the church) of Lk 18 and the bestowal of white robes upon the oppressed saints of Rev 6. This harmonizes with the parallel between 8:14 and the judgment scene at the end of chapter 7, and the similar relationship between 8:14 and 12:13. On all these counts 8:14 must point forward to the judgment at the end of the world, which will vindicate the oppressed people of God.

The combined evidence from all the foregoing points overwhelmingly supports an eschatological terminus for chapter 8.

Who or What Is Symbolized by the Little Horn?

Most of the things that should be said on this subject have been included in the answer to the previous question regarding the terminus of Dan 8. There we have noted that Christ, Paul, and John apply the little horn to manifestations of antichrist beginning with pagan Rome and climaxing with satanic delusions in the last days.

However, some other things must be said. What shall we make of the almost universal application of this symbol to Antiochus Epiphanes, for example? The present writer would say that such an application was right in what it affirmed but wrong in what it denied. That is to say, on the basis of the principle of multiple fulfillment so common to apocalyptic and prophecy, this little horn did have a prior minor fulfillment in Antiochus, just as surely as Mt 24 had a prior minor fulfillment in the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, as certainly as Joel 2:28, 29 had its first fulfillment at Pentecost, and as Mal 4:5, 6 had in John the Baptist. Such an interpretation is perfectly consistent with all that has already been said and with the facts of the case.⁴³

These conclusions are not novel. They represent the conclusions of the great majority of interpreters through the ages. Let us now ask, "On what basis have commentators seen Antiochus Epiphanes in the symbol of the little horn?"

According to the prophecy, a power would come from one of the lines succeeding Alexander which would grow "exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the glorious land." This power would devastate Jewish worship and the Jews themselves. It would manifest great cunning and malignity but would ultimately be destroyed by God. The specifications obviously fit the history of Antiochus fairly well. We say "fairly well" because as surely as Mt 24 includes features which AD 70 did not fulfill, just as certainly Dan 8 has elements which transcend Antiochus. Thus a modern scholar warns us as follows:

The "abomination" in Daniel seems much worse than that of I Mac 1:54, and it may be that he expected

the temple to be completely destroyed. The massoretic text of 9:26 is probably corrupt, but as it stands it says that "the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary." This seems to say that the temple will be completely destroyed, either by Antioch[us] or possibly by the Messiah. We must beware of reading Daniel too much in the light of what actually happened according to I Maccabees. In particular the cleansing measures which satisfied the Maccabees would surely not have satisfied Daniel.⁴⁴

This warning, of course, is only an echo of what others have said in previous years against resting in the idea that Antiochus fulfills chapter 8. Bishop Newton, for example, wrote in the eighteenth century as follows:

This *little horn* is by the generality of interpreters, both Jewish and Christian, ancient and modern, supposed to mean Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, who was a great enemy and cruel persecutor of the Jews. So Josephus understands the prophecy, and says that "our nation suffered these calamities under Antiochus Epiphanes, as Daniel saw, and many years before wrote what things should come to pass." In like manner St. Jerome explains it of Antiochus Epiphanes. . . . With St. Jerome agree most of the ancient fathers, and modern divines and commentators; but then they all allow that Antiochus Epiphanes was a type of Antichrist. Antiochus Epiphanes at first sight doth indeed in some features very much resemble the *little horn*; but upon a nearer view and examination it will evidently appear, that in other parts there is no manner of similitude or correspondence between them.⁴⁵

The obvious reason for such repudiation of the Epiphanes interpretation is the admission by most that the climax of the vision just does not fit, with any precision, what happened during the days of Antiochus. Note the following:

Dean F. W. Farrar, though personally holding the Antiochus theory, admits "that no minute certainty about the exact dates is attainable."⁴⁶ Dr. Charles H. H. Wright says:

All efforts, however, to harmonize the period, whether expounded as 2300 days or as 1150 days, with any precise historical epoch mentioned in the Books of the Maccabees or in Josephus have proved futile. . . .

No satisfactory interpretation has been given of the 2300 days regarded as referring to Maccabean times. It is quite possible that those 2300 days may be a period of prophetic days or literal years which have still to run their course.⁴⁷

Reckon as you will, there is no clear-cut period of either the one or the other length. Then the juggling of facts and figures begins. . . .

There is something basically wrong with such computations.⁴⁸

These two thousand and three hundred days can by no computation be accommodated to the times of Antiochus Epiphanes, even though the days be taken for natural days.⁴⁹

Not only the *time* but the *event* at the end of the time does not fit the Maccabean era. A recent scholarly work on Dan 8:14 sees a prophecy regarding the ushering in of the kingdom of God in glory, not merely the restoration of the temple under Judas Maccabeus.

He was not prophesying when the Re-dedication as such was going to take place, but . . . the *eschaton*.⁵⁰

It is significant that there is in Daniel no mention of a hoped-for rebuilding or rededication of the temple. In Daniel 2 a great stone "not made with hands" shatters the fourth kingdom and becomes "a kingdom which shall never be destroyed" (2:44). In 7:14, 27 it is again a kingdom which is given to the people of the saints of the Most High, when the fourth kingdom is destroyed.⁵¹

Whenever the profanation of the temple is discussed in this period in connection with an eschatological framework, the cleansing of the temple goes far beyond the rededication of the Maccabees.⁵²

This inadequacy of a Maccabean fulfillment for the fourteenth verse is matched by others.⁵³

Scott's Bible, quoting the two Newtons, summarizes these as follows:

"A horn of a beast is never taken for a single person: it always signifies a *new* kingdom; and the kingdom of Antiochus was an *old* one. Antiochus reigned over one of the *four* horns; and the little horn was a *fifth*, under its proper kings. This horn was at first a little one, and waxed exceeding great, but so did not Antiochus. . . . His kingdom on the contrary was weak, and tributary to the Romans; and he did

not enlarge it. The horn was 'a king of fierce countenance, and destroyed wonderfully, and prospered and practised: . . . but Antiochus was frightened out of Egypt by a mere message of the Romans, and afterwards routed and baffled by the Jews. The horn was mighty by another's power; Antiochus acted by his own. . . . The horn cast down the sanctuary to the ground, and so did not Antiochus; he left it standing. The sanctuary and host were trampled under foot two thousand and three hundred days (14), and in Daniel's prophecies days are put for years; but the profanation of the temple, in the reign of Antiochus, did not last so many natural days. . . . These were to last . . . to 'the end of the indignation' against the Jews; and this indignation is not yet at an end. They were to last till the sanctuary which had been cast down should be cleansed; and the sanctuary is not yet cleansed" (*Sir Isaac Newton*).

"Antiochus's kingdom was nothing more than a continuation of one of the four kingdoms; and cannot possibly be reckoned as a fifth kingdom springing up among the four. . . . When he stood up 'the transgressors in the Jewish nation were not come to the full.' . . . The holy city was inhabited with all peace; and the laws were kept very well; because of the godliness of Onias the high-priest, and his hatred of wickedness." 2 Mac. 3:1 (*Bp. Newton*).

These, and other expositors, therefore, suppose this little horn to mean the empire of the Romans, from the time when they had got footing in Greece and Macedonia; which formed one horn of the goat. They then entered on that stage, on which these events were to take place.⁵⁴

One other matter should be dealt with—the difference, if any, between the little horns of chapters 7 and 8. The similarities have already been noted, and these are easily accountable for if the apotelesmatic outreach of the symbol of chapter 8 reaches from the second century BC to the end of time. On the differences between the two horns, Keil, Leupold, Young, Boutflower, and others have ably written.

First, the little horn of chapter 8 is pictured as an outgrowth of the divisions of the third world empire, but in chapter 7 the horn comes after the divisions of the fourth empire. The origin of the first is not attended with the uprooting or superseding of other powers, but in chapter 7 the horn is pictured as uprooting three. The work of

the little horn of chapter 8 is described as beginning in the land of literal Israel and in connection with the services of the literal sanctuary. Such allusions are completely lacking in chapter 7, in which antichrist is taken up at the point where literal Israel was no longer in her land and where the prophecy concerns spiritual Israel—i.e., the Christian church.

In essence, the antichrist of chapter 8 is viewed as commencing earlier—after the days of Alexander. Its apotelesmatic application to later manifestations of antichrist matches the little horn of chapter 7 and runs parallel with it. All those commentators who have said of the former that it represents pagan and papal Rome have unconsciously used the apotelesmatic principle and thereby arrived at the truth.

In summary, then, the little horn of Dan 8 is an apocalyptic symbol of those powers making war on the church of God between the days of Alexander the Great and the end of the world. Its chief applications are to Rome—pagan and papal—and to the final apostasy, as indicated by Christ Himself.

The Cleansing, Vindication, Restoration, of the Sanctuary

We have come now to the crux of our studies: What is meant by the cleansing of the sanctuary?

And, of course, our answer has already been laid down for us if our reflections so far have been accurate. If this verse is the high point of the symbolic presentation, the seed of all that follows (including New Testament eschatology) as well as the summary of what has preceded, if its verb reflects the theme of the book, then the correct exegesis is already prescribed for us. "Then shall the sanctuary be cleansed ['restored,' 'vindicated']" must have to do with *judgment, restoration, vindication, the coming of the kingdom, elevation of the saints, punishment of the wicked, the establishment of a new order of things*.

If 8:14 parallels 7:9-13, it is saying the same thing and points to the great assize⁵⁵ and Christ's taking the kingdom for His people. If it is expanded in 9:24 and is parallel thereto, we must look for the consummation of what took place at

Calvary—finishing of transgression, the making of an end of sin, atonement for iniquity, the bringing in of everlasting righteousness, the fulfillment of all prophetic vision, and the anointing or dedication of a new system of things, even fellowship between God and His restored people.

If the last part of the book is commentary on the last part of this vision as previously suggested, then 8:14 means that chapter 12—particularly 12:13—says that all the saints shall stand in the judgment and receive their eternal destiny after the 2300 days. In that case “the time of the end” spoken of in 8:17 will mean the period of the judgment.

If 8:13 echoes the common Biblical plea for divine intervention and judgment, then verse 14 must point to the answer to that plea.⁵⁶

Once more, if the sanctuary is the microcosm of the kingdom of God, then its cleansing, vindication, restoration, must point to the reestablishment of that kingdom over the kingdom of men.⁵⁷

Furthermore we would expect to find something in the typical services of the sanctuary that comprehends all the concepts so far specified—something which would point to a finishing of sin, an atonement, a reconciliation, and a new beginning, with joy for the righteous and sorrow for those who have refused the sanctuary’s provisions.

Was there any familiar sanctuary ritual that spoke of all these things to the Jew? Indeed there was!⁵⁸ The Day of Atonement, the crucial service of the seventh month, to the Jew was a summation of God’s salvation. Coming at the end of the religious year, it pointed to the end of time. It belonged to the second complex of feasts, each member of which had eschatological significance.⁵⁹

On this special day, the only such of the year, the whole camp felt that it was on review by God. While day by day the Israelites had come individually to the sanctuary, now all were present at the one time for the sealing of decisions made throughout the months preceding. The camp saw in the two goats not only the representatives of God’s dealings with Christ and the antichrist but

also the representatives of the two groups in their own midst—one to be sealed for Jehovah and the other marked for Azazel.

The solemn silence marking the camp that day; the absolute prohibition of all types of secular work; the divesting by the high priest of his glorious robes and the substitution of an ordinary linen garment; his provision of much incense in order to pass into the second apartment where resided the law, the mercy seat, and the Shekinah glory; the return to the courtyard after a change back into the special apparel; the laying hold of the goat for Azazel and the symbolic lading of it with all the forgiven sins from the sanctuary (which hitherto had taken responsibility for them); the sending away of the goat into the wilderness; the final heap of ashes in a clean place as the only visible memory of the day; the subsequent rejoicing as the people now entered into the joys of the great harvest festival; the ascension to Jerusalem for festivity; the beginning of the jubilee (if it was the fiftieth year), with its freedom and release from bondage and debt—each and all of these pointed to the great reality of the final judgment and the kingdom of God in glory thus ushered in. Here then was the cleansing, vindicating, restoring, of the sanctuary in type.⁶⁰

It is not strange therefore that some Jewish and Christian scholars have paraphrased 8:14 as: “Then shall the sanctuary have atonement made for it.” Calvin says, “Some translate it—‘Then the sanctuary shall be expiated.’”⁶¹

Concerning the day of expiation, Lev 16 is indeed the final clue for the exposition of 8:14. Pointing forward to the great atonement made on Calvary for us by Christ, the antitypical Lord’s goat, it also prefigures the last work for us by Christ, our High Priest.⁶² It pictures the placing of the responsibility for evil upon its true instigator, the true little horn—Satan himself.⁶³ Thus God’s character, so long trampled in the dust by the scandal of sin, will be vindicated.

In the light of these reflections it becomes apparent that the apocalyptic portrayal of 8:10-14 symbolizes the great controversy between good and evil and its climax. The vindication of the sanctuary, which represents the divine kingdom, points not only to the vindication of the saints in

the judgment but also to the vindication of God and His truth. It must include, therefore, a work on earth that "cleanses" the church, God's sanctuary on earth, from the traditions of men and the shame of sin.⁶⁴ The law, which is so often in Scripture called "the truth" and which has been cast to the ground, must be uplifted. The true "daily"—the everlasting gospel of righteousness by faith, which has been "taken away" by all counterfeit religious systems—must be proclaimed again.⁶⁵

Part of God's truth that has especially been made war against is the Sabbath commandment in the heart of the law.⁶⁶ This commandment was intended by our Creator to be a constant symbol of the great truths of the gospel—a symbol that all we need comes by grace from Him and is not earned by human works but received through a vital relationship of trust and worship. This too must be proclaimed afresh in the "time of the end." The heavenly sanctuary, one with the church sanctuary on earth and whence all that happens down here is controlled, where Christ ministers as the great Goel—the Redeemer and Avenger of His people—must become central in the thinking of God's people. Its symbolism pictorializes all the great truths of law, gospel, providence, judgment, the kingdom, that we need to keep fresh in memory.

It would take another whole book to elaborate the truths implicit in the sanctuary and its cleansing. We do not attempt that here. Neither need we spell out in greater detail what has already been said, for if our foundations were well laid, the conclusions now reached are automatic. They are the logical consequence of all that has preceded and all which follows in the Book of Daniel. Nevertheless, there is one aspect of the symbolism which should be yet alluded to—the reference to what scholars call the concept of "the new temple."⁶⁷

Both 8:14 and 9:24 are included in the series of Old Testament texts which promise the institution of a new temple.

The new temple is a central idea of biblical eschatology from the earliest times and is found in the most diverse backgrounds. It explains the priestly legislation and the priestly interpretation of history

(both of which developed around the desire for a sanctuary worthy of God); it explains the great prophecies of the exile and post-exilic periods and the disappointment and enervation which the programme of Ezra and Nehemiah was designed to combat, just as it provides an important key to the meaning of apocalyptic.⁶⁸

Already in Tg. on Isa. 53:5 (Str-B., I. 482) the Messiah builds the house of the sanctuary; cf. also Tg. on Zech. 6:12f. (Str-B., I. 94). . . . There is no Jerusalem without the temple.⁶⁹

The glory of God—*kābōd* in the Hebrew Bible, *doxa* in LXX and New Testament—is another name for the Shekinah. . . . It may be specially associated with the tent of meeting . . . or with the Temple. . . . It is present in a special way in the heavenly temple (Rev. xv. 8) and in the heavenly city (Rev. xxi. 23).⁷⁰

Why is Christ "greater than the Temple"? There can be only one all-embracing answer. It is because God's presence is more manifest in Him than the Temple. On Him, not on the Temple, now rests the Shekinah. . . . the Lord Himself is the true Temple.⁷¹

So neither the teaching about the New Temple "not made with hands," nor the abolition and destruction of the old material Temple . . . are accidents or afterthoughts to Christianity. They are of its *esse*, inevitable corollaries of its central message.⁷²

Thus in recent years several scholars have devoted themselves to this study, and their work has direct bearing on our present task—the exposition of 8:14.

In one sense that which was promised by the Old Testament referring to a new temple met its fulfillment in Christ and His church,⁷³ but the consummation belongs to the future, as Rev 21:3 makes clear. Similarly, the great Atonement has been made on Calvary as the prelude to our Great High Priest's entering the presence of God in the heavenly temple, but the final application of it in the judgment is yet to be consummated.⁷⁴

Let us summarize. We have viewed 8:14, the climax to the symbolism of the book, in the light of its historical and literary contexts. The historical context indicates that the treading down of the sanctuary could be vindicated only by its restoration and the implementation of all that its services symbolized, particularly the closing services of the year—trumpets, atonement, tabernacles—which pointed to the consummation.

The literary context of parallel passages leads to the same conclusion. Scholars equate 7:9, 10, 26, 27 and 9:24 with 8:14 as all pointing to the final establishment of the kingdom via the medium of the judgment. Also part of the literary context is the enlargement of chapter 8 found in chapters 11 and 12. Chapter 11, verse 31f., describes the same events as 8:10ff. It speaks of a polluting of the sanctuary that would call for a corresponding cleansing. It speaks of a defiling that would demand an atonement. In plainer words still, in that closing portion of the final prophecy (12:13), which corresponds in place to the closing verse of the symbolism of chapter 8 (v. 14), Daniel is told he will stand in judgment at the end of the days to receive his eternal lot or inheritance. The literary content of Daniel's narratives also offers the same theme—the vindication of God and His people.

Even on the grounds of etymology the suggested meaning is supported, for 8:14 uses the Niph'al form of *sadaq*, while 9:24 uses the same root and links it with the adjective *'ôlam*, or "everlasting," found in that section of chapter 7 corresponding to 8:14 (see 7:27). Thus scholars such as Feuillet rightly insist on linking the judgment scene of chapter 7 with the promise of vindication in 8:14 and the consummation of that everlasting covenant regarding the forgiveness of sins as found in 9:24.

The immediate context of verse 13 with its "How long?" inquiry confirms all the foregoing. This oft-repeated plea is ever a prayer for divine intervention and judgment.

Last of all, the larger context of 8:14 must include the New Testament, particularly its eschatological portions and chiefly the Book of Revelation. Here we find the end of all things and the fulfillment of the divine covenant promises regarding forgiveness and communion in the everlasting kingdom. It is spelled out in terms of the feasts of Israel's seventh month, especially the Day of Atonement, *the day* of sanctuary ritual—that ancient symbolic day of judgment when Israel was divided into two camps and numbered either with the Lord or with the great adversary. In this book also we find pictured all that was symbolized by the ancient promise of a restored sanctuary. Rev 21:3 tells of "the new

temple" so long foretold.

Thus 8:14 points to (we employ various terms to communicate its meaning fully)—

- ... the eschaton.
- ... the undoing of the work of antichrist.
- ... the vindication of God's people, His truth, and His character.
- ... the judgment day,⁷⁵ which ushers in the kingdom of God with Christ dwelling with His people as the New Temple, promised throughout the prophets.
- ... the final proclamation of "that gospel of the kingdom" (cf. Mt 24:14 and Rev 14:6, 7).

Our initial three questions regarding the terminus of Dan 8, the identification of the little horn, and the cleansing of the sanctuary have now been answered. Let the reader evaluate whether or not the answers are interrelated, consistent both with each other and with the premises earlier laid down by way of introduction and exegesis, and whether the conclusions arrived at match the grandeur of the Biblical passage as indicated by the points made at the commencement of this chapter. The personal spiritual challenge that results from an understanding of these truths is just such a challenge as might be expected in this crucial period of earth's history. A true understanding of chapter 8 is calculated to furnish the dynamics needed for revival in the individual, the church, and the world.

This grand revelation assures us of the fidelity of God and of His plan to make an end of sin and to bring in everlasting righteousness. He has forgotten neither His downtrodden people nor the neglected law. Soon the universe will see holiness vindicated,⁷⁶ and amid eternal hallelujahs heaven's choirs will sing, "Just and true are thy ways, O King of the ages! . . . For thy judgments have been revealed" (Rev 15:3, 4).

⁷⁵ Note how the translators refer to Dan 8:13 alongside the statements by Peter (1 Pe 1:10-12, margin; see also footnote 8 on "Daniel and 'Last Things'").

⁷⁶ Wordsworth, Vol. 6, p. 40.

⁷⁷ Keil, p. 308.

⁴ Charles, *Exegetical Commentary*, p. 394.

⁵ 8:17-26; 9:22-27; 10:11-14, 19-21; 11; 12:1-4; and possibly 12:9-13 are Gabriel's words.

⁶ Compare 8:27 with later passages:

"I was appalled by the vision and did not understand it" (8:27).

"I have come to tell it to you; . . . therefore consider the word and understand the vision [of ch. 8]" (9:23).

"A word was revealed to Daniel. . . . And he understood the word and had understanding of the vision" (10:1).

"I left him . . . and came to make you understand" (10:14).

⁷ In this connection it is essential to recognize that the last three visions of Daniel, commencing with this one, revolve around the subject of the sanctuary. This chapter resumes the language of the sanctuary (Hebrew), portrays the future of the people of the sanctuary as related to other nations by animals used in the sanctuary ritual, discusses the coming war on the sanctuary itself and all it stands for, and climaxes in a promise regarding the vindication of the sanctuary. Note that this chapter assumes the rebuilding of the sanctuary and the recommencement of its services—these are taken for granted as a going concern in the vision, without any reference to the actual reconstitution that followed Israel's return from Babylon. That is left for the next vision—chapter 9. It too revolves around the sanctuary and its services, but unlike chapter 8 it gives in prophetic terms the account of its rebuilding as well as the items concerning its ultimate destiny introduced in chapter 8. The introduction to the final vision of chapters 10-12 discusses the conflict between the spiritual powers of heaven and hell as they battle over the issue of the sanctuary rebuilding. The only kings listed at the commencement of chapter 11 are those related to this same issue. 11:31, 45 and 12:11 highlight events in the future history of the temple and all it stands for. Recognized as a microcosm of the kingdom of God, the sanctuary is a key to the prophecies of Daniel, particularly 8-12.

⁸ "The sayings concerning the cessation of the sacrifice and the desecration of the site in Dan 8:11ff; 11:31; 12:11; are the prelude to all further temple apocalyptic. They . . . constantly give rise to fresh expectation" ("[hieros, to hieron]," G. Schrenk, *TDNT*, III:239. See also R. H. Hiers, "Purification of the Temple," *JBL*, XC [1971], pp. 82-90).

⁹ See James Morison, *A Practical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Mark* (Boston: N. J. Bartlett & Co., 1882), on Mk 13:14.

¹⁰ Discussing the sanctuary of 9:24, Lagrange says it is a *symbole du "règne de Dieu"* (M.-J. Lagrange, *Le Judaïsme Avant Jésus-Christ* [Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1931], p. 69). See also Gaston's remarks on the equivalence of the temple and the kingdom (*No Stone on Another*, pp. 118, 230, 243). Lange writes similarly: "The Temple has always been a symbol of the visible form under which the Kingdom of God has appeared" (*Commentary on Rev 11:1*).

¹¹ Feuillet has rightly stressed the parallel nature of these three passages. "Les trois oracles de vii, 13-14; viii, 14 et ix, 24 se complètent mutuellement et contribuent à exprimer la même réalité? Le sanctuaire tout spirituel que Dieu oint (ix, 24) est assuré de la présence divine grâce à la venue avec les nuées du Fils de l'homme (vii, 13-14), et c'est de cette manière que Dieu venge (viii, 14) le temple matériel profané par Antiochus" ("Le Fils de l'homme de Daniel et la tradition biblique," *Revue Biblique*, LX [1953], pp. 197, 198). English translation: "The three oracles of 7:13, 14; 8:14; and 9:24 complement each other and contribute to explaining the same truth. The whole spiritual sanctuary, which God anoints (9:24), is assured of the divine presence, thanks to the coming in the clouds of the Son of man (7:13, 14), and it is in this manner that God avenges (8:14) the material sanctuary profaned by Antiochus."

T. R. Burks says, "There is another feature common to the three latter in contrast with the former visions. They all make repeated allusions to the temple of God. In the eighth chapter the term translated 'the pleasant land' will be found, by a comparison with other scriptures, to denote the temple itself. Twice, again, in that vision the sanctuary is directly named. The prophecy of the Weeks also directly mentions the temple, both in the prayer of Daniel and the message of the angel. In like manner, in chapter xi, 16, 31, 41, we have a similar allusion. Each vision appears thus to divide itself into two portions, the times of the second temple, and a period of renewed and heavier desolation. Their close also looks forward to a third era, more blessed and glorious, when the sanctuary shall be cleansed, and the holy people shall be scattered no longer, but Gentiles shall come to the light of Zion, and kings to the brightness of her rising" (*Two Later Visions of Daniel*, p. 6; see also McKelvey, *The New Temple*, pp. 129, 130).

¹² Gaston, *No Stone on Another*, pp. 370, 381.

¹³ Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Future*, p. 202.

¹⁴ Bertil Gärtner, *The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the New Testament* (Cambridge: University Press, 1965), pp. 129, 130.

¹⁵ Gaston, *No Stone on Another*, p. 175.

¹⁶ Matthew Black, "The 'Son of Man' in the Teaching of Jesus," *The Expository Times*, Vol. LX (1948), p. 33.

¹⁷ C. F. D. Moule, "From Defendant to Judge—and Deliverer: An Enquiry Into the Use and Limitations of the Theme of Vindication in the New Testament," *Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas*, Bulletin III, p. 40.

¹⁸ Gaston, *No Stone on Another*, pp. 118, 119, 449.

¹⁹ Walvoord has written some excellent things on Daniel, though we cannot see light in his dispensationalist approach. His comment on 8:14 is representative of those who have failed to see its heights and depths. "This prophecy may safely be said now to have been fulfilled and does not have any further eschatological significance in the sense of anticipating a future fulfillment. . . . It is adequately explained in the history . . . of Antiochus

Epiphany" (p. 190).

²⁰ Henry Barclay Swete, *The Gospel According to St. Mark* (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1905), p. 304.

²¹ Bédé Rigaux, *L'Antichrist*, pp. 245-249.

²² H. H. Rowley, *The Relevance of Apocalyptic*, New and Revised Edition (New York: Association Press, 1963), p. 70.

²³ van Dudenwaard, "De gruwel der verwoesting," *Studia Catholica*, XX (1944), p. 125.

²⁴ Willi Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist*, trans. James Boyce et al (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1969), pp. 183, 184.

²⁵ Johannes Weiss, *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1906), Vol. 1, p. 195.

²⁶ Jan. Lambrecht, *Die Redaktion der Markus-Apokalypse* (Universitaire Stichting van België: Rom, Päpstliches Bibelinstitut, 1967), p. 145. Cf. D. E. Nineham: "This passage presents the exegete with difficulties as great as any in the Gospel" (*The Gospel of St. Mark* [Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1963], p. 351).

²⁷ Vincent Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark* (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1952), p. 511.

²⁸ Lambrecht, *Die Redaktion der Markus-Apokalypse*, p. 148.

²⁹ C. C. Torrey, *Documents of the Primitive Church* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1941), p. 30.

³⁰ Beasley-Murray, *A Commentary on Mark Thirteen*, pp. 52, 53.

³¹ See for one: Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist*, ch., "Mark 13."

³² Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, p. 514.

³³ "More than one exegete has taken notice of the verbal coincidences between Paul's Epistles to the Thessalonians and the 13th chapter of Mark. . . . It might be expected that in these very definite predictions of the future, if anywhere, the apostle would seek to support himself on the words of Jesus himself, and this indeed he claims to have done. . . . He says expressly in v. 15 that he declares this 'by the word of the Lord,' . . . and the assurance is found, in the words of Jesus, in Mark 13:27, 30, from which, with the support of the current and well-attested eschatological doctrines, every feature of Paul's declaration can be surely derived; there is no need to look further" (Torrey, *Documents of the Primitive Church*, pp. 36, 37).

³⁴ "Some form of infidelity and impiety will be established by Law even in the Christian church, as our Lord Himself foretells (Matthew 24:15). . . .

"So will it be in the last times. The church itself will be

betrayed by some in high places in her ministry, and by means of their timid and treacherous concessions and compromises it will be polluted by a form of worship which will make it execrable in the sight of God and will cause all good men to weep and hide their faces in shame and sorrow, and to forsake the courts of the sanctuary" (Wordsworth, Vol. 6, p. 62).

"We encounter 'the abomination of desolation' in Daniel in passages dealing with persecutions and oppression. . . . Bearing the context in mind, both in the Gospels and in Daniel (which was interpreted eschatologically), it seems probable that the symbol in question refers to some form of blasphemy which will characterize the last days. . . . Devastation will be . . . associated with it" (Lars Hartman, "Prophecy Interpreted," *Coniectanea Biblica*, New Testament Series 1, p. 152).

"The 'abomination of desolation' is a formula indicating an overthrow of God's religion, a desecration of what is holy, and a dissipation and corruption of His order of worship by some great God-opposing power. This description is evidently applicable with more or less exactness to several crises in history including . . . antichrist" (Joseph Tanner, *Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 56).

"When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with spiritualism, when, under the influence of this threefold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its Constitution as a Protestant and republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan and that the end is near.

"As the approach of the Roman armies was a sign to the disciples of the impending destruction of Jerusalem, so may this apostasy be a sign to us that the limit of God's forbearance is reached, that the measure of our nation's iniquity is full, and that the angel of mercy is about to take her flight, never to return" (Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, p. 451).

³⁵ C. H. Giblin says, "Though the precise structural arrangement in Mt-Mk is not the same, the figure occurs in these authors at a climactic moment, . . . the climactic moment of the apparent triumph of the unholy, . . . followed immediately by the appearance of the Lord who is the Rebel's nemesis" ("The Threat to Faith" [*Analecta Biblica*, XXXI, Rome: 1967], p. 74).

³⁶ See preface to chapter 10 for further discussion.

³⁷ See chart in Appendix A.

³⁸ H. H. Rowley, "Introduction to the Old Testament," *A Companion to the Bible*, ed. T. W. Manson (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1939), pp. 73, 74.

³⁹ The *SDA Bible Dictionary* in its article on the little horn says, "Passages that describe the 'little horn' and its activities are chs. 7:8, 20-26; 8:9-14, 23-26. Parallel passages whose context makes evident that the same power and same developments are being described in literal language are chs. 9:26, 27; 11:29-45; 12:1, 6-11. . . . In ch. 9:26, 27 the same power destroys Jerusalem and the Temple, causing 'the sacrifice and the oblation

to cease" and desolating the sanctuary."

Note that this comment from the *SDA Bible Dictionary* follows the parallels set out in the preceding charts, but it should be pointed out that the reference to causing "the sacrifice and the oblation to cease" is ambivalent, a double entendre, applying to Christ who did, in a real and worthy sense, what pagan and papal Rome have done by way of violence and counterfeit. To those who loved the earthly sanctuary 9:27 said in effect, "Do not be concerned by what wicked powers do to the typical system of ceremonial services. Such services are not intended to be perpetual but point to the work of the Messiah who will take them away by fulfillment."

⁴⁰ Many have seen the parallel nature of 8 and 9 as well as 10 through 12. Leupold, who speaks of "the unusually close connection" between 8 and 9, devotes several pages to the topic. Bishop Newton and Otto Zöckler are among the company who do similarly as regards the relationship between 8 and 10 through 12. Note their comments: "It is the usual method of the Holy Spirit to make the latter prophecies explanatory of the former; and revelation is (Prov. iv. 18) 'as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.' The four great empires of the world, which were shown to Nebuchadnezzar in the form of a great image, were again more particularly represented to Daniel in the shape of four great wild beasts. In like manner the memorable events which were revealed to Daniel in the vision of the ram and the he-goat, are here again more clearly and explicitly revealed in his last vision by an angel; so that this latter prophecy may not improperly be said to be a comment and explanation of the former" (Thomas Newton, p. 262).

Otto Zöckler says this: "It is not only the most comprehensive, but, because of its form and contents, also the most remarkable and difficult among the prophetic portions of the book. Having been composed later than the three preceding visions, namely subsequent to the captivity and when the return of the exiles had already begun, . . . it supplements their contents, and develops them still further—especially those of the second vision (chap. viii.) and of the third (chap. ix.)."

"The development of the fourth and last world-power to the stage of anti-Christianity, which was described with special interest in those two chapters, is now illustrated more fully than in any former instance, and at the same time, the ultimate triumph of the kingdom of God over that and all other opposing powers is brought into a clearer light and portrayed in more glowing colors than heretofore."

"The relation of the section to chap. vii. as serving to complement and still farther develop its subject, becomes especially prominent in this bright closing scene; while the prophecy is in so far complementary to chapters viii. and ix. as it describes the development of the anti-Christian world-power in predictions distinguished by a greater fulness of detail to say nothing of the similarity between its preparatory scenery and that of chap. viii. and also of ix. 20-23. The section serves to complete the visions of chap. viii" (p. 223).

⁴¹ Zöckler, pp. 269, 270.

⁴² Gesenius, *Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures*, trans. S. P. Tregelles (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1879), p. CLXV.

⁴³ See *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine* (Washington: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1957), p. 330; and Price, p. 31.

⁴⁴ Gaston, *No Stone on Another*, p. 118.

⁴⁵ Thomas Newton, p. 247. As to why God should wish the Jews to see in chapter 8 an anticipation of Antiochus, see Wilson, Vol. 2, pp. 270-276; and Fairbairn, *Prophecy Viewed in Respect to Its Distinctive Nature, Its Special Function and Proper Interpretation*, pp. 107, 108.

⁴⁶ Farrar, p. 266.

⁴⁷ Wright, pp. 186, 190.

⁴⁸ Leupold, pp. 355, 356.

⁴⁹ Thomas Newton, p. 258.

⁵⁰ Frost, *Old Testament Apocalyptic*, p. 199.

⁵¹ Gaston, *No Stone on Another*, p. 118.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 115. See also Buhl, "Daniel," *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1909), Vol. III, p. 349; Feuillet, *supra*; The Jerusalem Bible (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1966), fn. p. 1439.

⁵³ It is significant that the Jews themselves believed that Dan 8 was not exhausted by Antiochus. They anticipated a greater fulfillment in antichrist. Another evidence that the Danielic picture of the antichrist is bigger than the facts of the career of Antiochus is the admitted tampering with the Hebrew text by the LXX translators, who wished to make the Syrian tyrant the fulfillment. See Boufflower, p. 170f.

⁵⁴ Scott, Vol. 2, p. 822.

⁵⁵ See comments on 7:9, 10.

⁵⁶ It is to be regretted that many expositors largely ignore the relationship between verses 13 and 14. It is also regrettable that many dispensationalists ignore the principle discussed on page 51—namely that Old Testament predictions extending into New Testament time need to be shed of their "dispensational forms." There are no grounds for limiting 8:10-14 to the affairs of literal Israel. Compare, for example, the New Testament commentary on Amos 9:11 in Acts 15:14-17 and the worldwide enlargement of all the things of literal Israel found in the Book of Revelation.

⁵⁷ To understand Daniel's own reflections in connection with this vision, it is essential that we view it against his experience as recorded in the opening verses of the book. There we read of the despoil done to the sanctuary by a power from the north. Subsequently the daily "was taken away." Ancient and modern commentators are agreed that the calamity that overlooks the sanctuary between 605 and 586 BC represents the dissolution of the kingdom of God on earth.

The sanctuary was a microcosm of the divine kingdom operating among men. It represented not only the reign of God according to His righteous law but also His desire to dwell among men in order to bless them. Therefore the promise of Dan 8:14 could have meant to Daniel nothing less than the restoration of the sanctuary, with the reestablishment of all its services, particularly those which emphasized the final judgment on sin and complete reconciliation between Jehovah and His people. Thus the kingdom of God on earth would once more become operative.

⁵⁰ Some refer to the enthronement festivals, and although these may not have involved all that such scholars refer to, it is certain that the autumn feasts prefigured the enthronement of the Almighty among His purified people.

⁵¹ Revelation, the eschatological book par excellence in the New Testament, selects for its setting the imagery of the autumn feasts of Israel—trumpets, atonement, and tabernacles. In connection with the seventh seal, the seventh trumpet, the seven last plagues, and the commencement of the millennium we find elements of the Day of Atonement ceremonial. See Appendix G.

⁵² Our reasoning concerning the significance of the Day of Atonement for 8:14 is confirmed when we find the prophet in the next chapter praying for the restoration of the sanctuary and its services. In harmony with his prayer regarding the iniquity, transgressions, sins, of his people, pleading the everlasting righteousness of God as witnessed by prophets, the prophet is visited by Gabriel, who takes all the key elements of his prayer and weaves them into heavenly promises. Part of the angel's message has to do with atonement for iniquity.

The three words here used by the angel for sin had their chief combined usage in connection with the Day of Atonement (see Lev 16:21 and cf. Dan 9:24). Only in one other place in all the Bible are the three items conjoined—Ex 34:7, where the character of God—which is to be vindicated in the judgment—is described. James Barr rightly says on 9:24: "The meaning . . . is to be the eradication of sin, the completion of atonement, the establishment of an everlasting right order and a holy sanctuary." All of this was provided for and legally established by the atonement of Christ on Calvary, but it will be implemented in full only at the end of the age.

⁵³ Calvin, Vol. II, p. 110.

⁵⁴ The Old Testament always views redemption as a single act, and the first and second advents are not differentiated.

⁵⁵ Cf. Rev 12:4, 9.

⁵⁶ Notice these two statements by E. G. White: "The church of God upon the earth are one with the church of God above. Believers on the earth, and those who have never fallen in heaven, are one church. . . . In the inner court of heaven they listen to the testimonies of the witnesses for Christ in the outer court on earth" (*The Signs of the Times*, June 6, 1895).

"The Jewish tabernacle was a type of the Christian church. . . .

"The church on earth, composed of those who are faithful and loyal to God, is the 'true tabernacle,' whereof the Redeemer is the minister. God, and not man, pitched this tabernacle on a high, elevated platform. This tabernacle is Christ's body, and from north, south, east, and west, He gathers those who shall help to compose it.

"Through Christ the true believers are being represented as being built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (*ibid.*, February 14, 1900).

⁵⁷ John Wycliffe, Walter Brute, Nicolaus von Amstorf, and others of Reformation times expounded the "daily" of chapter 8 as the symbol for the true gospel and the acceptable worship accompanying it. Fletcher, Wesley's close associate, did likewise. See excursus on 8:14 at end of commentary on chapter 8 for more on the "daily."

⁵⁸ See comments on 7:25.

⁵⁹ Keep in mind that the New Testament's eschatological stress on the kingdom does the same thing as Daniel—repeatedly employs the imagery of the temple, or sanctuary. The theme of the new temple underlies several of Christ's sayings about Himself, His church, and His coming kingdom, and Paul and John continue the same metaphor.

⁶⁰ McKelvey, *The New Temple*, p. 179 (emphasis supplied).

⁶¹ Gotlob Schrenk, "Hieron," TDNT, Vol. III, p. 240.

⁶² R. A. Stewart, "Shekinah," *The New Bible Dictionary*, ed. J. D. Douglas (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1962), pp. 1174, 1175.

⁶³ Alan Cole, *The New Temple*, p. 12.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 55. See also, Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Future*, p. 202; *Jesus als Weltvollender*, cited by Beasley-Murray, *ibid.*; cf. Reinhart Hummel, *Die Auseinandersetzung zwischen Kirche und Judentum in Matthäusevangelium* (München: Chr. Kaiser, 1963), p. 93; Julius Schniewind, *Das Evangelium nach Markus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1963), p. 175; A. Feuillet, *op cit.*, pp. 196-198; Yves M. J. Congar, *The Mystery of the Temple*, trans. Reginald F. Trevett (Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1962), p. 159.

⁶⁵ If the question is asked, "What relevance can the Jewish sanctuary have for Christians?" the answer is near at hand for all familiar with the New Testament. It is the Book of Hebrews particularly that shows the relationship between the old and the new covenant, the typical services and their antitypical substance. See, for example, Heb 8 and 9.

But the Gospels and many of the other epistles are also rich in teaching concerning the significance of the sanctuary, or temple, for the Christian church. While Hebrews speaks in terms of the heaven of heavens where Christ intercedes for us as the true tabernacle, it also implies that the church itself where the Spirit of Christ ministers is also God's temple (see Heb 12:22-24; 13:10-13). Says McKelvey, "The new temple of the epistle embraces heaven and earth" (*The New Temple*, p. 150). The Gospels

emphasize this aspect of the ancient symbolism as they portray Christ as the New Temple, and teach as well that the same metaphor fits His body, that is to say, the church. Passages such as Eph 2:20-22; 2 Cor 6:16-7:1; and 1 Pe 2:4-10 elaborate further such teaching.

McKelvey shows that Christ's cleansing of the temple in Passion Week is part of the motif of judgment. He points out that the Gospels purposely interweave Old Testament passages of eschatological significance into such descriptions as the triumphal entry and subsequent events (see *The New Temple*, pp. 61-76).

The Book of Revelation also abounds in temple imagery. Particularly does it incorporate allusions to the times of Antiochus Epiphanes and the defiling of the temple that then took place as symbolic of attacks on the Christian church through the ages and specially at the end time (see Rev 11). Thus John's presentation of the Holy City as a new temple with God Himself tabernacling with His people points to the issue of the final judgment upon sin and sinners. All earlier cleansings of the temple prefigured this eschatological climax (see Rev 21:1-3; cf. with 11:19; 8:1-3; 20:1-3; and the typical ceremonial of Lev 16).

¹⁴ Ellen G. White comments: "The great Sacrifice had been offered and had been accepted, and the Holy Spirit which descended on the day of Pentecost carried the minds of the disciples from the earthly sanctuary to the heavenly, where Jesus had entered by His own blood, to shed upon His disciples the benefits of His atonement" (*Early Writings* [Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1945], p. 260, italics supplied).

This statement is representative of those writers who have seen the depth of significance in the typical cleansing of the sanctuary and its reference to both the provision of the atonement and its final application. Consider also the following from the same author:

"As in the typical service the high priest laid aside his pontifical robes and officiated in the white linen dress of an ordinary priest; so Christ laid aside His royal robes and garbed Himself with humanity, and offered sacrifice, Himself the priest,

Himself the victim. As the high priest, after performing his service in the holy of holies, came forth to the waiting congregation in his pontifical robes; so Christ will come the second time, clothed in garments of whitest white, 'so as no fuller on earth can white them' (Mark 9:3). He will come in His own glory, and in the glory of His Father, and all the angelic host will escort Him on His way" (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 33).

"Still bearing humanity, He ascended to heaven triumphant and victorious. He has taken the blood of the atonement into the Holiest of all, sprinkled it upon the mercy seat in His own garments, and blessed the people. Soon He will appear the second time to declare that there is no more sacrifice for sin" (*Signs of the Times*, April 19, 1905).

It was the cross that vindicated the law of God, the reflection of the divine character. It was more honored by the death of the Son of God than if all the human race had observed it perfectly. But only the judgment makes the vindication of the cross apparent to all creatures. Thus the connection is between inaugurated and consummated eschatology and the types and prophecies symbolizing such.

¹⁵ See commentary on 7:9, 10, regarding the pre-Advent judgment.

¹⁶ Keil places much stress on the fact that the word used for the temple in 8:14 is not identical with that employed in 8:11; 9:17; 11:31. It is the abstract term for holiness that is employed. For this reason he objects to the view that the promise of 8:14 points merely to a consecration of the sanctuary at the end of the days. "The words of the text . . . comprehend more than the purification and reconsecration of the temple" (p. 305). His suggestion is that the promise of 8:14 implies the restoration to its right state of "all that is holy" (*ibid.*). Others, such as Moses Stuart, have also seen the breadth of the statement. Thus our own exposition as found above—an exposition that alone harmonizes with the subsequent Danielic use of this vision (see particularly 12:1-3), and the New Testament employment of the same throughout its eschatology (see Mk 13; Mt 24; Lk 21; 2 Th 2; and the entire Book of Revelation, especially 21:1-3).

Commentary on Daniel 8

Hebrew, the language of Israel, is resumed, as is fitting for the section of the book that will have most to say about the destiny of the people of God. Even the symbols employed are different from those in the Aramaic section. Now we have no wild beasts, but the sacrificial creatures of the sanctuary, and instead of such Babylonian imagery as the colossus and the mountain, we have figures garbed in priestly linen. Even time here is expressed in terms of the *tamid* service—the evening and morning offerings (see 8:14, 26).

Chapters 8-12 are a unit that revolves around the theme of the desolation and restoration of the sanctuary and the divine kingdom on earth that the

sanctuary symbolized. Thus each of the chapters refers to the temple and the conflict concerning it. Chapter 8 is the seed-plot for all that follows. The outlines sketched in this chapter find substance and color in the ones that succeed it. One should not fail to observe that the present chapter takes for granted the restoration of the desolated sanctuary *prior* to the little horn's attack. The 2300 days are shown by the next chapter to begin with that restoration and to close with a much vaster work of spiritual restoration on an enlarged scale. Is 58 uses similar language in speaking of the latter-day rebuilding of God's temple of truth, including its broken-down wall of the law.

1 In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me, Daniel, after that which appeared to me at the first. ²And I saw in the vision; and when I saw, I was in Susa the capital, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in the vision, and I was at the river Ulai.

Daniel's opening statement links the present vision with the one previously recorded, and it is certain that each casts light on the other just as surely as the vision of chapter 7 elaborates that of Nebuchadnezzar in chapter 2. It is particularly

important to note that Medo-Persia is *not* characterized by two separate animals. This chapter is the first to name certain of the powers portrayed, and by so doing confirms previous exegesis. The one power not named is that of the

Romans, still unknown to the ancient world. The New Testament, however, complements Daniel (see Jn 11:48, which names this fourth power). It is important to realize that only four supreme kingdoms dominating the people entrusted with the oracles of God are announced by name in Scripture from Daniel's day to the close of the canon.

Daniel does not claim to have been physically present at Susa. He was there in vision, as Ezekiel similarly was taken "to Jerusalem" (see Eze 8-11). Because Babylon was near its end, in this vision a commencement is made with the succeeding power. Susa was the winter capital of the Persian Empire. Ulai was a large canal, about 900 feet in breadth, which flowed by the city.

The reference to the river is significant. The previous vision had presented beasts emerging from the stormy Mediterranean Sea. This was most appropriate inasmuch as two of the world powers symbolized, Babylon and Persia, sprang

up on one side of the Mediterranean, and the other two, Greece and Rome, from the other side. Now, however, the emphasis shifts from a general presentation of the four monarchies to the events marking the transition from the second to the third kingdom. The Ulai points to the area where the ram and he-goat would encounter each other in order to set the stage for the greatest threat of all to Israel. The mention of a river in this chapter, as in chapters 10 and 12, is also symbolic of other truths. To the Oriental mind, rivers were a symbol of invading armies (see Is 8:7). In Rev 12:15, as well as Dan 9:26 and 11:22, 40, flooding waters are used as an emblem of persecution and destruction. Here in 8:16, as also in 12:6, Christ is seen above the waters, conveying the message of Ps 93:1-4 that as Sovereign Lord He is "mightier than the noise of many waters," mightier than invading hosts, and well able to guard His people. "The Lord sits enthroned over the flood; the Lord sits enthroned as king for ever" (Ps 29:10).

³I raised my eyes and saw, and behold, a ram standing on the bank of the river. It had two horns; and both horns were high, but one was higher than the other, and the higher one came up last. ⁴I saw the ram charging westward and northward and southward; no beast could stand before him, and there was no one who could rescue from his power; he did as he pleased and magnified himself.

5 As I was considering, behold, a he-goat came from the west across the face of the whole earth, without touching the ground; and the goat had a conspicuous horn between his eyes.

The Hebrew text literally reads: "And behold, *one* ram was standing before the stream and he had two horns," as if to stress the contrast between the two numbers. While Bevan's¹ commentary says that the figure of a ram with two horns proves that there were two successive empires—Media and Persia—the facts indicate the opposite. J. E. H. Thomson rightly, though sarcastically, called upon Bevan to "use his ingenuity, and show us any way by which the actual facts of the history and constitution of the Medo-Persian Empire can

be represented in a symbol that would not be liable to his misinterpretation."²

The Arabic word for ram means "warrior." In Eze 34:17-22; 39:18 the ram is a symbol of princely power, and ancient records declare that the king of Persia, when at the head of his army, bore in the place of a crown the head of a ram. The same figure is frequently found on Persian seals. The ram butted westward, northward, and southward; it conquered Babylon, Syria, and Asia Minor in the west as well as pushing toward

Greece. It overran Colchis and Armenia and Scythia in the north. Part of Arabia, Egypt, and Ethiopia were subdued in the south. Thus Medo-Persia is represented as an Eastern power spreading in the other directions of the compass. Here, too, is correspondence to expressions in chapter 7 such as "three ribs" and "devour much flesh." The "three" points of the compass betokened also by the ribs indicate a falling short of the world-conquest to all four points by the next two powers.

The goat was an apt symbol of the following empire. From 500 BC to 146 BC Macedonian coins were minted with various likenesses of a goat. Alexander the Great claimed to be the offspring of Jupiter Ammon, whose symbol was a goat. Alexander's successors, in some instances, are pictured with the horns of a goat on their coins.

The Syriac version states explicitly that the goat is "Alexander, the son of Philip" and that the ram is "Darius the Median king." The reference to the goat's speed, not touching the ground, is an evident allusion to the leopard with four wings in the previous prophecy, and thus it is impossible to hold, as some endeavor to do, that the third beast from the sea is a representation of Persia.

This power, in contrast to the preceding, comes "from the west." Verse 21 interprets for us and tells us not only that the goat is Greece but that the prominent horn represents "the first king," that is, the kingdom under Alexander. It is interesting to reflect on the comparison between a goat and a ram. The former evidences much more strength and agility, and thus fittingly pointed to the fast-moving and powerful armies of Alexander.

⁶He came to the ram with the two horns, which I had seen standing on the bank of the river, and he ran at him in his mighty wrath. ⁷I saw him come close to the ram, and he was enraged against him and struck the ram and broke his two horns; and the ram had no power to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled upon him; and there was no one who could rescue the ram from his power.

Some of the greatest battles of history such as Marathon, Thermopylae, and Salamis are implied by the vision in this chapter. The present passage points to the later victories of Greece, and the twice-mentioned reference to the river as being the site of the ram cannot but remind one of the first historic battle in this set of wars—Granicus, named thus because of the river where the opposing armies met. The account of the Greek conquest is very much truncated. As Bury reminds us about Granicus: "This victory was very far from laying Asia Minor at the conqueror's feet."³

The later battles of Issus and Arbela which finally broke the Persians are not described in any detail—all this is further evidence of the genuineness of the prophecy. It is doubtful that anyone writing after the events would have described the Macedonian conquest so. The reference to the breaking of the two horns is clear when we recall that horns are an emblem of strength and thus the following statement is epexegetical when it says, "And the ram had no power to stand before him."

⁸Then the he-goat magnified himself exceedingly; but when he was strong, the great horn was broken, and instead of it there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven.

This verse emphasizes the sudden fall of Alexander from victory heights. There was no gradual deterioration, but rather a premature death fulfilled the prediction. Alexander, as is well known, died at the age of thirty-three, partly from his overexertions and partly from fever augmented by intemperance. His kingdom collapsed with him.

Again we have a truncation of the succeeding events, one that would have been difficult to invent

by a writer of later times. The twenty years of strife between Alexander's generals is passed over, and only the result is stated. Ultimately the empire was divided into four kingdoms—Macedonia, Thrace and Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt, ruled respectively by Cassander, Lysimachus, Seleucus, and Ptolemy. Possibly the symbolism also indicates the fact that Alexander's great empire was to be dispersed to the four points of the compass.

9 Out of one of them came forth a little horn, which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the glorious land. ¹⁰It grew great, even to the host of heaven; and some of the host of the stars it cast down to the ground, and trampled upon them. ¹¹It magnified itself, even up to the Prince of the host; and the continual burnt offering was taken away from him, and the place of his sanctuary was overthrown. ¹²And the host was given over to it together with the continual burnt offering through transgression; and truth was cast down to the ground, and the horn acted and prospered.

It is quite certain that any Jews reading these verses prior to Christ but after the Maccabean revolt would have thought of Antiochus Epiphanes. So the apocryphal books of Maccabees apply the prophecy, and likewise the translators of the LXX and all rabbinical interpreters. Thus pious Jews were encouraged to believe that God had both foreseen and forewarned regarding the greatest catastrophe since the Exile. But it is just as certain that intelligent Jewish readers saw *more* than just Antiochus. A. J. Mason in his commentary on 2 Thessalonians writes:

Even those prophecies of Antiochus in many points do not suit Antiochus at all; and not only so, but the Jewish expositors themselves held that Antiochus had not exhausted the meaning of the prophecy. They themselves *applied it to some Antichrist*, whose coming should precede, and be defeated by the Christ's. Even in St. Jerome's time, "From this place onwards" (he is commenting on Dan. xi. 36) "the Jews think that Antichrist is spoken of, that, after the little help (verse 34) of Julian, a king shall arise who shall do according to his own will, and

lift himself up against all which is called God, and speak great things against the God of gods, so that he shall sit in the Temple of God and make himself god, and his will be performed, until the wrath of God be fulfilled: for in him shall the end be. Which we, too, understand of Antichrist."

Thus according to the current explanation of the Jews, Antiochus was looked upon as a *type* of the Antichrist, whom they expected to arise (in fulfillment of Dan. vii. 8) at the overthrow of the Roman empire, whose coming was to precede the Christ's. The only change made by the Christian Church is to apply to the *Second* Advent a prophecy which the Jews applied to the one advent which they recognized. It is impossible not to do so when, in Dan. xii. 2, we have the Resurrection made to follow close upon the development of this Antiochus-Antichrist.⁴

This emblem which before the prophet's gaze grows from nothingness to a powerful horn raking the heavens of its stars has no slight fulfillment. When one even considers quantitatively the space given by the prophet to the various kingdoms and

then the space given to this symbol, it becomes apparent that this last power is more important than the rest combined—and this could hardly be true of Antiochus. As E. C. and R. B. Henniges comment: "All this language is too definite, and describes an influence too far-reaching, to find fulfillment in the comparatively limited sphere of Antiochus."⁵

Particularly is verse 24 significant where the Hebrew reads: "And his power shall be great but not by his own power." This is such an unusual expression that some critics (including the RSV translators) take the second reference to "power" as a gloss. However, the MS reference is in favor of its retention, and furthermore we have in the New Testament an explanation (see Rev 13:2, 4). This earthly tyrant has help from "beneath."

Inasmuch as the New Testament itself applies this symbol in more than one way, including at least pagan Rome and the final antichrist, we have good grounds for asserting that this prophecy is apotelesmatic. Most commentators, without using that term, have actually believed so. And if this is the case, it is not strange that some elements appertain more to one application than to another.

Thus the difficulty for those who interpret the horn as of pagan Rome when they come to "out of one of them" (v. 9). It can indeed be said that Rome became a world power after its subjection of Macedonia, that it succeeded to Greek culture, and that the interpretation of the prophecy found in the chapter itself puts no stress on this matter of origin, but it must also be said that the more natural explanation is that found in the first fulfillment, i.e., Antiochus Epiphanes, who literally did emerge from one of the four divisions of Greece.

The majority of commentators quote 1 Maccabees, chapters 1, 4, and 6, at this point. We think that appropriate, but the meaning suggested is incomplete if we omit a more important commentary—that found in the New Testament in Mt 24:15; Mk 13:14; 2 Th 2:3, 4; Rev 12:4; 13. There can be no doubt whatsoever that the New Testament takes the symbolism of the little horn and boldly applies it to Satan and the successive powers through which he worked after the first advent of our Lord, beginning with pagan Rome and ending with antichrist.⁶ This is a safe example

to follow, and history records that the Holy Spirit has led the church through the ages so as to apply the prophecy.

All apotelesmatic prophecies are inevitably similar to parabolic prophecies, such as Eze 40-48 and Rev 9, where general emphases, rather than every jot and tittle, are to be taken as having didactic purpose. Apocalyptic is a type of prose painting, and as in parables, some things are present for background rather than for a specific teaching purpose, as is so in this type of prophecy. For example, in Mt 24 it is doubtful whether many interpreters take such details as "Let him who is on the housetop not go down" as having an application at the end of the world.

The main points are clear: an insidious power by cunning as well as force desolates the outward signs of God's kingdom, profaning all that is sacred and persecuting all who oppose. Idolatry and persecution are the prominent characteristics of antichrist in every age, thus the repeated reference to "the abomination of desolation" throughout Daniel. The suspension of true worship and the substitution of idolatrous worship are ever the end objective of satanic powers. Many commentators have recognized that Daniel's most sharply etched warnings are against powers that presume to legislate in matters of religion and do so at the price of the lives of nonconformists.

The war against the sanctuary and the host is not something begun in the days of Antiochus. It is shown in operation at the very commencement of the book. Babylon is seen doing exactly what the little horn does in this chapter. The exaltation of worldly kingdoms against the divine is a continuous affair. That which is seen on earth but dimly reflects what takes place in the supernatural realm where principalities and powers interact. Dan 8:10-13 teaches what is enlarged in chapter 10 and what was earlier intimated in chapter 4. These chapters show that earthly conflict is but the issue of a greater battle, one between spiritual "principalities and powers." Heavenly beings are watchers of all the impiety taking place on earth. Not only do they watch but they participate—intervening to vindicate God's people and to establish His kingdom. But for them, worldly powers would swallow up the work of God. The

message of 8:10-14 in effect is: "Although a reprieve will be given Israel after Babylon's overthrow, following the breakup of Alexander's kingdom Satan will intensify the opposition of earthly powers to the worshipers of the true God, and this antagonism will be unrelenting until the 'time of the end.' At that time, God will begin a new work, a final work, which will give vindication, rest, and enlargement to His people."

Thus the little horn is a later example and an intensification of the warfare against the sanctuary implied by the whole book.⁷ It exemplifies what is taught by the other prophecies and what is inferred by the historical chapters—that the Gentile powers will ever be characterized by blasphemy, idolatry, and persecution of those who worship "in spirit and in truth." Only in the final apocalypse of Scripture do we learn that those who ultimately

will constitute Babylon the oppressor, and the little horn in the latter days, will be composed of apostate worshipers of God.

The reader is referred back to the preface to this chapter for a fuller discussion of the little horn. At this point we would but emphasize the fact that the most literal fulfillment of these verses took place in AD 70, *not* under Antiochus, who at no time completely devastated the sanctuary. Expositors at the time of the Reformation also applied the passage spiritually to the devastation of the true faith by the apostate medieval church that linked itself to the powers of the state for purposes of persecuting. Verses 23-25 are the words of interpretation concerning the little horn given from heaven itself, and every exposition of the little horn must conform to the specifications here given. See the commentary on these verses.

13Then I heard a holy one speaking; and another holy one said to the one that spoke, "For how long is the vision concerning the continual burnt offering, the transgression that makes desolate, and the giving over of the sanctuary and host to be trampled under foot?" 14And he said to him, "For two thousand and three hundred evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state."

Never should these verses be separated. Tragically, too many expositions have ignored the question when commenting upon the answer, but it must be said in this connection what Christ said in another—"What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder." Therefore, whatever interpretation of verse 14 is accepted, it should be relevant to the inquiry of the angel in verse 13—that is, it must have to do with divine intervention to justify the saints who have been trodden underfoot, Heaven's undoing of the work of the little horn and its punishing of all behind that malevolent banner.⁸

Furthermore, it should be noted carefully that the question is not merely, "How long shall the sanctuary be trodden underfoot?" but, "For how long is this vision that culminates in the terrible work of the little horn?"⁹ The vision actually

begins with Medo-Persia, and thus we would expect that the 2300-day period should likewise begin in the days of that empire. The vision assumes that the sanctuary is a going concern before the little horn comes on the scene, and inasmuch as the sanctuary is central to the revelation, it might be expected that the 2300-day period would begin with some event associated with the restoration of the sanctuary and the people of the sanctuary.

What further clue are we given as to the beginning of the period named? In this chapter—none. Despite the admonition from Christ to Gabriel to explain the meaning of the vision to Daniel, *this objective is not accomplished in chapter 8*. The angel began his task, dealt with the early features of the vision and then with the little horn. However, as he came to the place where the

meaning of the cleansing of the sanctuary should next have been explained, he was permitted only the observation that the vision was to extend many days and that it should be shut up. At this point Daniel fainted, and Gabriel could explain no more. Not yet had Christ's command been fulfilled. The meaning of 8:14 is not understood by Daniel or anyone else. He says so in the final verse of the chapter.

Did Gabriel ever fulfill his commission? Did he complete his explanation of the vision? Where should we look, if not in the next chapter? In chapter 9 we find the prophet praying about the very matter left unexplained—the restoration of the sanctuary. In his thinking, of course, this expression must have implied Israel's return from Babylon to Jerusalem to reinstitute the sanctuary services. And so he prays, "Cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary, which is desolate. . . . Behold our desolations" (9:17, 18). Both these references to desolation come from the same Hebrew word used in 8:13 regarding the transgression of desolation. Thus Daniel has the unexplained portion of the vision in mind. The angel's first words in response to the prayer fit all the foregoing like a key to a lock. Note how Scripture prefaces them by the statement that the speaker is the one first introduced to us in the previous chapter:

The man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the first, . . . said to me, "O Daniel, I have now come out to give you wisdom and understanding. . . . Therefore consider the word and understand the vision" (9:21-23).

Daniel is here referred back to the vision in which Gabriel had previously appeared, and he is told to pick up the threads of that occasion. "Understand the vision." Gabriel proceeds to speak on the matter of *when* and *what*—two items from the vision of chapter 8, both connected with verse 14, and both left unexplained hitherto.

A starting point is now offered for a period of 490 years that is "cut off" from a longer period already named to the prophet.¹⁰ That starting point is "from the going forth of the word to restore and build Jerusalem." In the next chapter we shall discuss the reasons why most commentators over

the centuries have fixed 457 BC as the date here intended.

The words of the angel (9:22-27) explain the vision of chapter 8 referred to.¹¹ As in the vision of chapter 8, Gabriel begins with the time of Medo-Persia. The transgressions referred to in 8:23 are again mentioned, and it is promised that they will be finished and atoned for. The attack on the sanctuary by the little horn prince is described thus:

"The people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary" (v. 26). The key Hebrew term for desolation used in 8:13 is repeated twice in verse 27. The "end" of 8:17 is echoed in the "consummation" (KJV) here, and the destruction of the little horn without hand is indicated by the words "until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator."

Christ Himself has quoted 9:27 in His Oliver sermon as applying not only to events in the first century but also to the end of the era, and this is the key to the exegesis of this entire passage. But our present emphasis is on the eschatological meaning. The parallels mentioned between this revelation and that of chapter 8 show that we are on firm ground when we affirm that this present message is Gabriel's continuation of his commission to give understanding to Daniel. And specifically he is explaining the *what* and the *when* of 8:14—the cleansing of the sanctuary at the end of the 2300 days. The key statement on the *what* is the setting forth of six glorious promises in verse 24—all the blessings fulfilled by Messiah the Prince when He was cut off are to be consummated at the time of the end. The *when* has its clue in the starting point indicated in verse 25.

How can 2300 days from 457 BC reach to the "time of the end" (8:19)? Only on the basis that the time here given, as with all else in the vision, is symbolic. But symbolic of what? The commentators who have applied 8:14 to the latter days have also used the year-day principle. Thus the 2300 days extend from 457 BC to 1844. In 1844 began the cleansing of the sanctuary, the restoration in fullness of the everlasting gospel that the daily services prefigured, the vindicating work of God in heaven above and in the earth beneath.¹² See the preface to this chapter for an elaboration of this

theme—the cleansing, vindicating, restoring of the sanctuary, timed in Heaven's counsels to begin two thousand three hundred prophetic days after

the ancient restoration of the sanctuary and the holy city.¹³

15 When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it; and behold, there stood before me one having the appearance of a man. ¹⁶And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, and it called, "Gabriel, make this man understand the vision." ¹⁷So he came near where I stood; and when he came, I was frightened and fell upon my face. But he said to me, "Understand, O son of man, that the vision is for the time of the end."

18 As he was speaking to me, I fell into a deep sleep with my face to the ground: but he touched me and set me on my feet. ¹⁹He said, "Behold, I will make known to you what shall be at the latter end of the indignation; for it pertains to the appointed time of the end."

Verse 16 uses "understand," one of the key words of the book. It is one that Christ Himself adopted when referring latter-day Christians to the study of Daniel (Mt 24:15). The same word is repeated in verse 17 and again at the close of the chapter. We again meet with it at the point of continued explanation in 9:23. Its last use links it with the time of the end as does 8:17 (12:9, 10). Few volumes in the world exhibit such a planned unity of its parts as does this prophetic work.

The use of the expression "the vision" should also be observed. Before chapter 8 the word occurred chiefly in the plural, but henceforth "the vision" is mentioned about a dozen times, almost always referring to "the vision" of this chapter. This prophecy is preeminently *the* vision of the book.¹⁴

Keil cites Kliefoth concerning "the time of the end," noting that it is not "the absolute end of all things."¹⁵ He then proceeds to apply it to the whole Christian age. It is true that the New Testament does speak of the time since the First Advent as "the end of the age." It is also true that the prophets usually viewed the redemptive work of Christ as a single accomplishment rather than a process involving two advents separated by millennia. But that which in God's providence was once seen as a single event has since the cross been

revealed otherwise, and it therefore seems best to say that though a period of time rather than a point is intended by this expression, it is that period bordering eternity during which God sends His final warning and does His last work for men in the judgment. The fact that 11:36–12:3 lists several events taking place during the "time of the end" and during antichrist's final "fling" confirms such an interpretation. Zöckler says concerning this phrase, "It refers to the final period of earthly history."¹⁶

Verse 18 will be repeated in the later experiences of the prophet described in chapter 10, as is the case with many of the subsidiary elements of the background of this chapter—another indication that 10-12 embraces the same line of events as the present prophecy.

The reference to "the latter end of the indignation" (v. 19) points to God's wrath against evil.¹⁷ Thus this verse is partly interpretative of verse 14, which is said to reach to "the time of the end," the time of divine judgment upon evil, when God will make an end of sin. Verse 19 is alluded to also in 9:27 where again we have an appointed destruction for the wicked. This is further evidence that 8:14 is eschatological in significance.

²⁰“As for the ram which you saw with the two horns, these are the kings of Media and Persia. ²¹And the he-goat is the king of Greece; and the great horn between his eyes is the first king. ²²As for the horn that was broken, in place of which four others arose, four kingdoms shall arise from his nation, but not with his power.”

The references here to the second and third of the great monarchies could not be more clearly stated. The kingdom under Alexander is likewise

easy to recognize, as is the subsequent fourfold division of Greece in the years that followed (see the commentary on 7:6).

²³“And at the latter end of their rule, when the transgressors have reached their full measure, a king of bold countenance, one who understands riddles, shall arise. ²⁴His power shall be great, and he shall cause fearful destruction, and shall succeed in what he does, and destroy mighty men and the people of the saints. ²⁵By his cunning he shall make deceit prosper under his hand, and in his own mind he shall magnify himself. Without warning he shall destroy many; and he shall even rise up against the Prince of princes; but, by no human hand, he shall be broken.”

The main theme of this passage has been already discussed in the preface to this chapter and the commentary on verses 10-14. We add a few comments upon what is distinctive in these verses and upon their apotelesmatic application.

These verses interpret the little horn. What is said fits pagan and papal Rome with considerable exactitude (and Antiochus Epiphanes to a much lesser extent). There is also “a blending of application, certain features applying to both, others more specifically to one or the other.”¹⁸

For example, the reference to “the latter end of their rule” fits well the gradual rise of Rome, beginning after the weakening of the division of the Macedonian Empire. Antiochus reigned more near the middle of the period of the Hellenistic kingdoms, but it was in his day that Rome turned Macedonia itself into a Roman province. The enveloping dominion was not complete for more than a century. A date of 30 BC is often suggested for the complete absorption of the territories of Alexander by Rome.

The expression “when the transgressors have

reached their full measure” can equally well be translated: “when the transgressions have come to the full.” It was in the days when the professed people of God sealed their rebellion by rejecting the Messiah that Rome was ruling in not only Palestine but the known world.

The “king of bold countenance” is an allusion to Deut 28:50, a passage long understood as applying to the Romans and their oppression of the Jews. The “bold countenance” does not fit Antiochus so well, for he was frightened out of Egypt by a single Roman messenger. “One who understands riddles” is translated by R. H. Charles as “skilled in double dealing” and fits the parallel passage in 11:21, 23, as well as 8:25. This characteristic fits both pagan and papal Rome.

The footnote of 8:24 (RSV) should be observed, as the textual evidence for its preservation is strong. Translators have found it difficult to understand, but it is probably interpreted for us in Rev 13:2: “The dragon gave [him] his power and his throne and great authority.”

The "fearful destruction" mentioned in verse 24 fits imperial and papal Rome better than it does Antiochus. The latter killed 40,000 Jews when he took Jerusalem, but Rome destroyed many times more in AD 70, and the toll of the Middle Ages resulting from religious intolerance was far greater still.

The reader does well to recognize the strong similarity of wording here with both 7:25 and 11:36f. Chapter 7 describes antichrist as exalting himself by speaking against the Most High and wearing out the saints. Chapter 8 says the little horn magnifies himself and destroys many. In chapter 11, verses 36 and 44 unite the ideas thus: "He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods" and goes "forth with great fury to exterminate and utterly destroy many." The parallelism continues in the respective descriptions of the fate of the little horns and the willful king. In chapter 7 the little horn has its dominion taken away in order that it might "be consumed and destroyed." In 8 it is "broken"

"by no human hand." In 11 the same power "comes to his end, with none to help him." Compare the concentration on this antichrist figure in each vision. It dominates the scene. Note for example how the references to this power (as "he") appear first in 7:24, 25; next in 8:24, 25; and then in 11:21-45.

Another set of comparisons is worthy of study. In 7:25 the little horn opposes the "Most High" and stands in contrast to the Son of man (v. 13); in 8:11 it magnifies itself "to the Prince of the host"; in verse 25, "against the Prince of princes." In 11:22, "the prince of the covenant" is broken in the wake of his victorious onslaught. He gives no heed "to the one beloved by women" (v. 37). It is antichrist versus Christ throughout. The same is true in 9:24-27 where the invading prince of verse 26 is in contrast to "Messiah the Prince" of verse 25 (KJV). We have a similar comparison in the Olivet discourse where the Son of man is seen as the nemesis of the "abomination of desolation" that has menaced the sanctuary and precipitated a time of trouble such as never was.

26 "The vision of the evenings and the mornings which has been told is true; but seal up the vision, for it pertains to many days hence."

27 And I, Daniel, was overcome and lay sick for some days; then I rose and went about the king's business; but I was appalled by the vision and did not understand it.

Verse 26 should be linked with verses 17, 19, and 12:4, 9. All tell the same story—that this vision extends until the last days when God shall judge the world. It is impossible to limit "the time of the end" spoken of in verse 19 to the last part of the Old Testament age, for it comprehends within its scope the resurrection of the dead (12:2, 3) and the eternal glory of the redeemed (v. 3).

Verse 27 is a good example of a psychosomatic illness. The mental strain and intense excitement engendered brought the physical reaction here described. Note, however, that Daniel rallies and resumes his normal duties, content for God to tell him more in His own good time. The word

translated "appalled" is the same Hebrew word as translated "desolate" in verse 13. The term can apply to spiritual or physical desolation. Thus the close of the chapter repeats words and phrases (such as "evenings and mornings") from verses 13, 14, as if to emphasize their importance. Some scholars, such as Jeffery, go so far as to suggest that the account is a literary device prolonging suspense that comes from the yet incomplete explanation of 8:1-14.

¹ A. A. Bevan, *A Short Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1892), p. 130.

² Thumason, p. 238.

³ Bury, *History of Greece*, p. 389.

⁴ A. J. Mason, "2 Thessalonians," *Ellicott's Commentary on the Whole Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1954), Vols. VII, VIII, col. 2, p. 168.

⁵ Henningsen, p. 150.

⁶ Gaston points out the obvious link between the little horn and the Lucifer of Is 14. He writes: "As soon as the vision proceeds to the deeds of the 'horn,' the reference to Is 14 is unmistakable" (*No Stone on Another*, p. 377). Hartmann does likewise, page 160. This is analogous to Rev 12:4, 9, where Dan 8:10 is quoted and applied to Satan and his earthly representatives. See preface to Daniel 10.

⁷ Any historical review of the ravages of Jerusalem, the city of the sanctuary, if joined to the prophecies of Revelation that foretell a continuing onslaught against the spiritual holy city (the church), will illustrate this passage of Scripture. See Appendix G.

⁸ Literally the text reads, "Then shall holiness be vindicated." There is no article before "holiness"—thus while the sanctuary is certainly in focus, this abstract form of the word hints at the breadth of the concept encompassed. Holiness, its source, its seekers, its substance—all are now to be vindicated. Five times in the previous chapter the same root is used for the "holy ones" or "saints" who are to be vindicated in the judgment. Obviously from the context, the law that has been "changed" and the Giver of that law shall likewise be vindicated.

⁹ Leupold comments in verse 13: "How far does this vision reach?" And Ferrar Fenton: "Can you say for how long the Vision is?" (*The Complete Bible in Modern English*).

¹⁰ All are agreed that the literal meaning of the Hebrew *chathak* is "to cut off." This word, as with *sadaq* (Niph'al form) in 8:14 is a *hapax legomenon*—a once-used word in Scripture.

¹¹ See charts of parallels in preface to Daniel 8.

¹² October 22, 1844, was the tenth day of the seventh month of the Karaite Jewish calendar that year. It was known as Yom Kippur or the Day of Atonement. For a detailed discussion of how interpreters of prophecy arrived at this date see LeRoy E. Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1954), Vol. IV, pp. 784-851.

¹³ See Appendix F—"The Year-Day Principle."

¹⁴ See Introduction section, "Literary Structure of the Book and the Key Verse Thus Indicated."

¹⁵ Keil, p. 311.

¹⁶ Zöckler, p. 181.

¹⁷ See Rev 14:7-10; Dan 11:36; 10:25; 26:20 (KJV); Heb 10:27 (KJV). Note Moffatt's translation of 8:19: "Come, I will let you know what is to happen during the closing days of the wrath divine, for the vision relates to the crisis at the close." Zöckler comments on pages 181 and 182 that the wrath here spoken of is "the Divine indignation upon the godless world, . . . which naturally will be manifested most strongly toward the close of human history, when the tares of wickedness shall flourish most luxuriantly (see v. 23 and Matt. xiii. 30, 39; cf. Matt. xxiv. 9 et seq.). For this reason the last times shall constitute a period of great tribulation and woes."

¹⁸ SDA BC, Vol. 4, p. 845.

Excursus on Daniel 8:10-13

There is nothing in Scripture without relevance for the present. Biblical history does not merely concern the past, nor Biblical prophecy the future. Scripture is the Word of Life, echoing the pronouncements of the living God, and all of it applies now.

All the promised blessings of the future can be mine now spiritually. In Christ, "old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor 5:17, KJV) for each believer now, though the absolute fulfillment applies to the new heavens and the new earth (see Rev 21:5). The sins of Adam, Cain, Abraham, David, Peter, Judas, are sins which could overtake me now. The warnings given to Israel of old have meaning for me at this very moment. The commandments proclaimed at Sinai apply to the inhabitants of New York, Sydney, or Tokyo today. The deliverances pictured in Holy Writ tell me what God can do for me in my present trouble.

Therefore, as we contemplate Dan 8:10-13 it is essential that we sense more than the purely historical application of the prophecy. Satan through the ages has made his major effort consist of diverting attention from the meaning of the Roman cross at Golgotha millennia ago. In a thousand ways he has "taken (it) away" and "trampled" upon it. Prior to Christ's first coming

the sacrificial system instituted by God was a compacted prophecy of the gospel and was therefore hated by the great adversary. The war against the sanctuary was the war against the cross. Since the destruction of the earthly sanctuary, the tactics of hell have changed but not its purpose.

Through the Dark Ages men were caused to forget the heavenly sanctuary and its Priest by a system that claimed to offer in itself the antitype of Israel's sacrificial system. Churches with their candlesticks, incense, and holy water emulated Israel's sanctuary, and a sacerdotal caste became, as it were, the counterpart of Israel's priest. The sacrifice of the Mass diverted attention from the "once for all" character of Christ's sacrifice at Calvary. Works took the place of faith, and earthly civil power substituted for the power of the Spirit.

For long ages men were taught that they must earn their acceptance with God and climb the weary ladder to heaven. The gospel became good advice rather than the Good News, and the glory of a reconciliation between God and man already accomplished by the God-man was obscured. Salvation was man-centered, and the coming of Luther was the coming of a new Copernicus who directed men to a new viewpoint of reality that was theocentric.

Wherever men are taught that righteousness is

something of their own achieving and that God accepts sinners only after they have become saints—there we have “the taking away of the daily” and the “casting down” and “trampling underfoot” of the sanctuary—there we have the false gospel of Babylon that leads to confusion.

The restoring, therefore, of the sanctuary, must include the proclamation of “the everlasting gospel” (KJV) of God’s grace whereby all men hear that God is already reconciled to them through Christ and that “this man receives sinners” (Lk 15:2). Such a message is foretold in Rev 14:6-12. It will be but an amplification of the gospel given in Eden when the sinner was told that God Himself by His grace would subdue the serpent and place a holy enmity in the hearts of men against the sin they naturally love.

Today the heady “wine” of Babylon is still being offered to the multitudes of earth. It comes in diverse forms but reveals its true nature whenever it leads men to look to themselves rather than to Christ. The modern seeking after an experience to validate one’s acceptance with Heaven is a reversion to the errors of the Dark Ages. The gospel of the contemporary charismatic movement, and that of ecumenism, is often Babylonian at its core. Anything in religion that is not *sola gratia* (solely by grace), or *sola fide* (solely by faith), that is, *solus Christus* (solely by Christ), comes from beneath and not from above.

The truths most essential for our eternal welfare are best set forth in the Book of Romans. This book should be made the touchstone of anything that claims to be the way to God. Here we read:

While we were . . . [yet helpless] . . . Christ died for the ungodly. . . . While we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we are now justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. Not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we

have now received our reconciliation. . . .

Then as one man’s trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one man’s act of righteousness leads to acquittal and life for all men (Rom 5:6-11, 18).

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have [faith and] peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (v. 1).

The Good News is that though the believer is still a sinner, and still a penitent, he is still right with God. In the words of Luther:

Therefore a man can with confidence boast in Christ and say: “Mine are Christ’s living, doing, and speaking, His suffering and dying, mine as much as if I had lived, done, spoken, suffered, and died as He did.”¹

And much more recently another has declared:

There is not one for whose sin and death He did not die, whose sin and death He did not remove and obliterate on the cross, for whom He did not positively do the right, whose right He has not established. There is not one to whom this was not addressed as his justification in His resurrection from the dead. There is not one whose man He is not, who is not justified in Him.²

We repeat: Any system, any teaching, that seeks to do by human effort what Christ has already done, that believes God’s favor is granted by any merit in us rather than wholly in Christ, that looks to any experience in the present rather than Christ’s experience at the cross, that substitutes any word of man for the Word of God—that system, that teaching, casts down the holy angel, God’s sanctuary, God’s Priest. Could it not therefore be called essentially Babylonian?

Therefore, “come out of her, my people” (Rev 18:4).

¹ *Luther’s Works* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1957), Vol. 31, p. 297.

² Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1956), Vol. IV, part 1, p. 630.

Excursus on Daniel 8:14

Do the 2300 Evening-Mornings Represent 1150 Days?

The expression linked with the number 2300 (*'ereb boqer*—evening morning) has been a puzzle to most interpreters except those of the historicist school who applied to it the year-day principle. Others have tried every stratagem to make the number conform to events in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes.

The most common method of easing the tension of this exegetical difficulty is to make the chronological period harmonize as closely as possible with "a time, two times, and half a time" of 7:25. James Barr is one of the most recent to echo this method when he dogmatically asserts without offering evidence that the 2300 evenings and mornings stand for 1150 days with the two daily sacrifices. He, however, is frank enough to point out that "this is only roughly equal to the 3½ years of 7:25" and adds, "The reason why precisely 1150 days are mentioned is not clear."¹

Many have seen the impossibility on sound hermeneutical principles of interpreting the expression as signifying 1150 days and therefore have either applied the year-day principle to the passage or sought for appropriate events in the times of Antiochus to match the prediction. Walvoord, for example, refers to the "almost endless exegetical controversy" over 8:14, and then proceeds to reject the 1150 days as a viable

exposition. Note his conclusions, which represent fairly that of many other interpreters who have decided against halving the number 2300.

Generally, expositors even of differing schools of eschatological interpretation follow the idea that these are twenty-three hundred literal days.²

Using the figure of eleven hundred and fifty days only creates more problems as it does not fit precisely any scheme of events and has a dubious base.³

Taking all the evidence into consideration, the best conclusion is that the twenty-three hundred days of Daniel are fulfilled in the period from 171 BC and culminated in the death of Antiochus Epiphanes in 164 BC. The period when the sacrifices ceased was the latter part of this longer period. Although the evidence available today does not offer fulfillment to the precise day, the twenty-three hundred days, obviously a round number, is relatively accurate in defining the period when the Jewish religion began to erode under the persecution of Antiochus, and the period as a whole concluded with his death.⁴

Wordsworth, Fausset, and many others take a position akin to that of Walvoord. We think that the application thus made is acceptable, but only on an apotelesmatic basis, whereby typical fulfillments always fall short of the ultimate fulfillment. Certainly we cannot rest in such an interpretation that is offered by Walvoord as being

final because of the clear statement in 8:17 that the 2300 evenings and mornings extend to that period known as "the time of the end," the borders of eternity (cf. 12:1-4, which shows that "the time of the end" covers the final increase of knowledge upon the latter-day prophecies of Daniel, the last crisis and deliverance, and the resurrection of the righteous from the dead).

The desire to classify 2300 as a round number that only roughly approximates the facts is condemned in the last chapter of Daniel, where we see the angel placing a great deal of stress on the difference of 45 days when he speaks of the 1290 and the 1335 days.

Young refers to the 1150-day hypothesis but emphatically declares that "there is no exegetical support for the position."⁵ He thus follows such careful scholars as Moses Stuart and Keil. The former held that the expression in 8:14 indeed included an allusion to the evening and morning sacrifices but that it was intended to set forth 2300 cycles of the daily service which was marked by these.⁶ Keil devotes nine pages to the subject, and his conclusions should be stated.

When the Hebrews wish to express separately day and night, the component parts of a day of a week, then the number of both is expressed. They say, *e.g.*, forty days and forty nights (Gen vii:4, 12; Ex xxiv:18; 1 Kings xix:8), and three days and three nights (Jonah i:17; Matt xii:40), but not eighty or six days-and-nights, when they wish to speak of forty or three full days. A Hebrew reader could not possibly understand the period of time 2300 evening-mornings of 2300 half days or 1150 whole days, because evening and morning at the creation constituted not the half but the whole day. . . . We must therefore take the words as they are, *i.e.* understand them of 2300 whole days.⁷

⁵ Barr, p. 599.

⁶ Walvoord, p. 189.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 190.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Young, p. 174.

¹⁰ Cited by Zöckler, p. 178.

¹¹ Keil, pp. 303, 304.

Preface to Daniel 9

The pages of commentary that have been written upon chapter 9 would take the average man a lifetime to read. One purpose of this chapter is to gather together the chief exegetical gems that have been mined by the Christian church in twenty centuries. We trust that the resulting cluster will foster a spirit of awe, gratitude, and praise.

Chapter 9 is not only the devotional heart of the book but also contains "the crown jewels" of Old Testament prophecy. Verses 24-27 constitute an inexhaustible mine, gleaming not only with prophecies which are vast and comprehensive but with a series of the most scintillating, all-encompassing promises to be found in Holy Writ.

Consider the encomium of one writer:

The political prophecies were like a wide landscape painting, with a Babylonian and Persian foreground, a Greek and Roman middle distance, and a papal extreme distance, stretching away to a glorious golden horizon line where earth and heaven meet and mingle in the coming kingdom of God. But this Messianic prediction is, on the contrary, like a beautiful portrait, and the eye, that like Noah's dove could only rove restlessly over the bloodstained scenes of earth's ever-shifting empires, can rest with joy on this matchless miniature, for the impress of Divinity sits on the holy brow, and the light of infinite love and benevolence beams from the eye, while the

lips have language and utter wondrous words of pardon, peace, reconciliation, renewal, and everlasting righteousness. Of all the prophecies in the Bible, Daniel's of the "seventy weeks" is the most wonderful and the most important. It stands erect among the ruins of time like the solitary and colossal obelisk amid the mounds of Heliopolis, grandly evident, archaic in its rugged simplicity, covered with an ancient script, whose decipherment demands indeed some study, but richly repays it; its authoritative assertions cut clear and deep in the hard granite, defying time's power to efface their record; its sentences few, but full of meaning, their very style betraying their origin and Divine authority.¹

Sir Isaac Newton, the greatest of scientists prior to the modern period, wrote a commentary upon the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation. He described 9:24-27 as "the foundation stone of the Christian religion," because centuries in advance it gave the exact time of the appearance of the Messiah and the date of His death, as well as a comprehensive description of His saving work in heaven and earth. The prophecy likewise tells what would be the fate of the Jews consequent upon their rejection of the One whose coming they had long anticipated. The destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 was history's testimony that the offerings and services of the sanctuary had met

their fulfillment in the advent of the promised Messiah.

As previously indicated, and as will be more fully demonstrated, this present prophecy is the counterpart of chapter 8. The two combine to make the most comprehensive forecast ever offered to man. They tell of the first and second advents of Christ, His ministry on earth and in heaven, the destiny of the people of God in both dispensations, the apostasy and trials prominent in each era, the final warning message to the world, the last crisis between human and divine laws and their advocates, the judgment in its varied aspects, and the ultimate establishment of everlasting righteousness as the Divine King condescends to tabernacle among men in the earth made new.

Before discussing the depths of this prophecy we would urge the reader to think upon the following from Thomas Scott. It presents the "commonsense" meaning of these famous verses.

It is, however, undeniable, that Daniel foretold that the Messiah would come within less than five hundred years from a decree granted for rebuilding Jerusalem; he showed that he would be put to death by a legal sentence; (for so the word implies;) and he expressly predicted, that in consequence, Jerusalem and the temple would be desolated, and the nation of the Jews exposed to tremendous punishments, of which no termination is mentioned. Within that time, Jesus of Nazareth appeared: he answered in every respect to the description given of him by all the prophets: he was put to death as a deceiver; yet vast multitudes became his disciples, and Christianity gained a permanent establishment. After a time, Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed; and the state of the Jews to this day is a striking comment on this prediction. How can it then be denied that Daniel spake by divine inspiration? or that Jesus is the promised Messiah? Both these important points might be fully demonstrated by this one prophecy, even if it stood single; how much more when it is only one star, so to speak, in a resplendent constellation; or one among a great number of predictions, all of which combine with united evidence to demonstrate the same grand truths!²

Schools of Interpreters

It is not enough to sound the praises of Dan 9. We must also wrestle with its problems. According to their answers to fundamental

questions that must be asked in connection with verses 24-27, exegetes find themselves in separate schools of interpretation.

By far the most prominent school today, because of its dating of the book in Maccabean times, sees in these verses a description of events that transpired in connection with Antiochus Epiphanes and his attack on the Jewish faith. These interpreters follow in the rank of the translators of the LXX, although the latter believed in the sixth-century origin of the book. Both groups, it is admitted, have had to twist the Hebrew original, and particularly the time periods, in order to make their interpretation fit at all.³

We content ourselves here with repeating the fact that the very ingenuity manifested both by the LXX and liberal exegetes—their transposition and emendation of sections of the text—is positive proof that the passage was never intended to say what they have tried to wring from it. Second, the same evidence proves that the prophecy is no *vaticinium post eventum* (prophecy after the event). Had the latter been the case, a much more accurate and adequate portrayal of the events of history would have been presented.⁴

One other point should be noted. The prayer prefacing the prophecy is also obviously non-Maccabean in origin. If the prayer had been written in the days of Antiochus IV, it certainly would have invoked the wrath of Heaven against the persecutors of Israel. Instead, we find a meek submissiveness that acknowledges the justice of the punishment suffered by the nation. Those who compare this prayer with the apocryphal writings of the last pre-Christian centuries—those of Baruch, Ecclesiasticus, Judith, the noncanonical additions to Daniel—find a "great gulf fixed." The latter are verbose, prolix, and chauvinistic. Daniel's prayer is none of these.

The situation here is similar to that of chapter 8, the prophecies in each chapter covering the same ground. Both speak of an attack upon the sanctuary by a wicked leader. One speaks of a temporary taking away of the "daily" and the other of the permanent cessation of "sacrifice and offering." Most commentators who have given the prophecy study in depth affirm that God in His

mercy intended the faithful before the Christian era to see even in this prophecy shades of Antiochus. See the commentaries of Zöckler, Auberlen, Bosanquet, Fausset, Hofmann, Delitzsch, and a host of others from very ancient times to the present. As R. D. Wilson has stressed—under Antiochus was attempted what had never been proposed by Babylonian or Medo-Persian overlords, namely the entire destruction of the Jewish people and religion at one fell blow. Had this attempt succeeded, the necessary preparation for Christ's coming would not have taken place.

Says Wilson, "The continuity of the church would have been destroyed, the records of the Old Testament might have disappeared as utterly as the archives of Tyre, . . . the New Testament could not have been written, the life of Jesus would have been entirely different, the method of the early propagation of the gospel must have been altered and the whole plan of salvation changed."⁵

Auberlen writes, "It was therefore necessary that special prophetic announcement should prepare the people for Antiochus."⁶ Bosanquet and others have listed the parallels to their own day that the Maccabees would have recognized in Dan 9:24-27. Here they are:

1. A command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem
2. The appearance of an anointed prince
3. His death
4. Damage to the city and the sanctuary
5. The ceasing of sacrifice
6. The overspreading of abominations in the temple, making it desolate
7. The anointing of a holy of holies at the end
8. Fulfillment in sabbatical cycles of years

Thus, "who could fail in Maccabean days, notwithstanding many obvious difficulties in the application, to couple vaguely these events of Antiochus Epiphanes with Daniel's words in chapter 9? They were so applied."⁷

But Antiochus certainly did not fill out the prophecy. He did not, for example, destroy the city or the temple. Thus, in later years, after Antiochus but before Christ, the Jews began to look for a greater fulfillment. Josephus records the later Jewish conviction that this passage pointed to the Roman devastators of Jerusalem, and that the

long-awaited Messiah was the first prince mentioned in the prophecy. That the Jews were correct in these second thoughts, the New Testament testifies. For example, the only words of Daniel that could be meant by Mk 13:14, as words of future import, would be 9:26, 27.

The next school of interpreters is also a prominent one, consisting as it does of the vast majority of modern evangelical writers on prophecy, i.e., dispensationalists of the Scofield Bible variety. Such writers as John F. Walvoord believe that the seventieth week is to be detached from the sixty-nine and that its fulfillment will take place at the end of the age. The sixty-ninth week is supposed to have terminated at the time of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The clock of prophecy is thought to have then ceased to tick. It will resume when God's dealings with literal Israel resume, namely at the time of the nation's restoration en masse to Palestine.

It is further supposed that the "he" mentioned in verse 27 is a future prince of the revived Roman Empire who will make a covenant with the restored Jews, only to break it after three and a half years. This violation of treaty will be attended by the enforced suspension of the temple sacrifices, which are to be resumed when Israel rebuilds the temple to mark her restoration to Palestine. At that time the Jews will be urged to worship an image set up in Jerusalem, and a literal mark will be placed upon all conformists. Deliverance will dawn as the Messiah returns.

Says Walvoord:

The culmination of the entire prophecy of the seventy weeks is the second advent of Jesus Christ which closes the seventieth seventh of Israel as well as the times of the Gentiles pictured in Daniel's prophecies of the four great world empires. For most of the period, the two great lines of prophecy relating to the Gentiles and Israel run concurrently, and both end with the same major event—the second advent of Jesus Christ, when oppressed Israel is delivered and the oppressor, the Gentile, is judged. With Israel today back in the land, the fulfillment of these prophecies may not be too long distant.⁸

What should be said about this group of interpreters and their exegesis? In all charity it

should first be said that they include many devout students of the Word. But next we must confess that such exegesis as theirs flies in the face of the acknowledged canons of Scriptural hermeneutics since the Reformation and the practice of the inspired New Testament writers.⁹

Specifically, in this connection, it must be pointed out that 9:24-27 gives not the slightest hint that there is to be a gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks. The seventy weeks are as surely a unit as the seventy years of Jeremiah. Had Jeremiah's prophecy contained a gap, Daniel would never have been able to understand the prediction. He would have been deceived by it. The same is true in the present instance.

In further support of the fact that the seventy weeks contain no gap, we would point out that there is admittedly no gap between the first period of seven weeks and the second of sixty-two weeks, and therefore there can hardly be any basis for seeing a gap between the second and the third.

Again we should note that the covenant spoken of as being confirmed is the everlasting covenant confirmed by Christ on Calvary. *Nowhere in the New Testament is there the slightest suggestion that antichrist is to make a covenant with anybody in the last days.* But on the other hand, some of the very wording of this prophecy was used by Christ in connection with the memorial of His death. On that occasion when He gave the cup to His disciples, He said, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins" (Mt 26:28). Mauro comments as follows:

In these words we find four things which agree with the prophecy: 1st, the One who was to confirm the covenant, Christ; 2d, "the covenant" itself; 3rd, that which "confirmed" the covenant, *the blood of Christ*; 4th, those who receive the benefits of the covenant, the "many." The identification is complete; for the words correspond perfectly with those of the prophecy, "He shall confirm the covenant with many." There could not be a more perfect agreement.¹⁰

Goodspeed translates Mt 26:28:

You must all drink from it, for this is my blood

which ratifies the agreement, and is to be poured out for many people, for the forgiveness of their sins.¹¹

This translation rightly represents the concepts implicit in Christ's words, particularly by its use of "ratifies." The "blood of the covenant" can mean only the blood which ratifies the covenant. The Hebrew for "confirm" (KJV) (*gabar*—in the Hiph'il or causative form *higbir*) in 9:27 literally means "to make strong" or "to cause to prevail." The thought of ratification is entirely appropriate, but the thought of initiating a covenant is not!¹²

We would agree with the dispensationalists that antichrist, as well as Christ, is present in this prophecy. That which literal Rome did to literal Israel and the literal sanctuary was later done by spiritual Rome to spiritual Israel and the spiritual sanctuary. In the last days antichrist will again attack the temple of God, the church. Christ in His sermon on the end of the world applied the prophecy of verse 27 in this way as well as to AD 70. But it is not at all necessary to eradicate any of the testimony to the Messiah in this passage in order to grant that this prophecy, as with the preceding ones, mentions the great antagonist of the church as well as her Great Defender. Christ is the chief subject of the present prophecy, and it is He who confirms the covenant by His death. Thus understood, the first half of verse 27 reiterates the reference to the death of the Messiah in verse 26 but shows the benefits of that tragedy. The manner in which antichrist is implicit in these verses will be later delineated in the commentary.

Yet another group of interpreters represents the traditional, conservative approach to this prophecy used both before and since the Reformation. They apply the prophecy to the 490 years between the decree of restoration in the days of Artaxerxes (465-423 BC) and AD 34 when the Christians turned from the Jewish nation to the Gentiles with the message of salvation. Until the rise of dispensationalism this view was cherished by most Christians.¹³ We will discuss this approach and the next two simultaneously.

A smaller but influential and scholarly group has contended that 9:24-27 points both to the coming of the Messiah at His first advent and also to events associated with His return. They stress

the eschatological emphasis of the passage, especially in verses 24 and 27. The seventy weeks are regarded as a symbolic rather than a literal period of time, extending from Israel's return from Babylon to the end of the world. Keil writes as follows on the last two promises of verse 24:

The anointing is the act by which the place is consecrated to be a holy place of the gracious presence and revelation of God. If thus the anointing of a most holy is here announced, then by it there is given the promise, not of the renewal of the place already existing from of old, but of the appointment of a new place of God's gracious presence among His people, a new sanctuary. This, as Kliefoth further justly observes, apart from the connection, might refer to the work of redemption perfected by the coming of Christ, which has indeed created in Him a new place of the gracious presence of God, a new way of God's dwelling among men.

But since this statement is closely connected with those going before, and they speak of the perfect setting aside of transgression and of sin, of the appearance of everlasting righteousness, and the shutting up of all prophecy by its fulfilment, thus of things for which the work of redemption completed by the first appearance of Christ has, it is true, laid the everlasting foundation, but which first reach their completion in the full carrying through of this work of salvation in the return of the Lord by the final judgment, and the establishment of the kingdom of glory under the new heavens and on the new earth—since this is the case, we must refer this sixth statement also to that time of the consummation, and understand it of the establishment of the new holy of holies which was shown to the holy seer on Patmos as [*hē skēnē tou Theou meta tōn anthrōpōn* (the dwelling of God is with men)], in which God will dwell with them, and they shall become His people, and He shall be their God with them (Rev xxi. 1-3).

In this holy city there will be no temple, for the Lord, the Almighty God, and the Lamb is its temple, and the glory of God will lighten it (vers. 22, 23). Into it nothing shall enter that defileth or worketh abomination (ver. 27), for sin shall then be closed and sealed up; there shall righteousness dwell (2 Pet. iii. 13), and prophecy shall cease (1 Cor. xiii. 8) by its fulfilment.

From the contents of these six statements it thus appears that the termination of the seventy weeks coincides with the end of the present course of the world.¹⁴

Last, another group, including Fausset, understands the seventy weeks as a period of 490 years and yet views the whole passage as apotelesmatic, applying to both advents. That is, they see verse 24 fulfilled by Christ's perfect atonement on Calvary, but "filled full" in the last judgment, which will usher in the kingdom of glory. Says Fausset on "everlasting righteousness"—"the restoration of the normal state between God and man . . . to continue eternally (Heb 9:12; Rev 14:6)."

Fausset applies the anointing of the most holy to God's dwelling with His people in the age to come, just as Keil does. Quoting yet another phrase from 9:24, he writes: "It is only when sin is 'made an end of,' God's presence can be perfectly manifested" as our reconciled Father and God.¹⁵ Expositors in this group reject the dispensationalist gap theory, and also the viewing of the seventy weeks as purely symbolic, but they are prepared to grant that the actions of antichrist are foreshadowed in the predicted desolations of Jerusalem by Rome.

Questions Which Divide Exegetes

To weigh the merits and demerits of the last three schools demands that we first answer the pivotal questions that, according to the answers given them, divide these groups of interpreters.

1. What is the relationship, if any, between the 2300 days and the seventy weeks?

2. Does this prophecy contain prominent eschatological elements? And if so, are these present by way of direct statement or only in the sense of an apotelesmatic fulfillment?

3. Is the prophecy in any respects conditional? Was the destruction of Jerusalem after the coming of the Messiah inevitable, or was it the penalty for the rejection of Christ?

4. Is the time period to be understood literally or symbolically? And if one of these can be affirmed, do we mean in that sense exclusively? Thus, if the period is to be taken symbolically, does that exclude all literal time features, and if on the other hand, the seventy weeks are construed literally, does that necessarily exclude *all* symbolic elements?

5. Is only literal Israel addressed by this

prophecy, or does it pertain also to spiritual Israel—to the New Testament church?

Helps to Interpretation

In order to answer these questions aright, certain exegetical clues should be considered. These include the historical setting and the literary context, the key words of the chapter, and the New Testament usage of this prophecy. While such helps should always be sought for interpreting any passage in the Old Testament, they are particularly relevant for the present prophecy. And by the historical setting we mean more than is usually intended, as the following heading indicates.

1. *Daniel's own understanding of 9:24-27 as implied from his historical situation and his study of Jeremiah's restoration prophecies.*

No passage of Scripture can be fully understood apart from its historical setting. Let us reconstruct the situation of the ancient prophet when he received this message from Heaven.

Daniel, an exile, whose beloved city and temple had been desolated, received a promise that God would intervene for His people and restore the sanctuary (8:14). The seer determined to pray for more light. Did the revelation concerning the 2300 evenings and mornings mean that the return from exile would be delayed for nearly seven extra years beyond the initial seventy?

In chapter 9 Daniel is told that the blessings he seeks for his people and city are soon to begin to unfold, but that in their fullness they are dependent upon the work of the Messiah. The glorious things foretold by Jeremiah (and read by Daniel) as following the seventy years of captivity are not to be fulfilled immediately at the termination of the exile (see Jer 23, 31). God's professed people apparently are not yet ready for the glorious kingdom of God. There is to be a return to Jerusalem, the temple is to be rebuilt, the people are to reap the blessings that flow from the forgiveness of their national sins and transgressions. But the Messianic kingdom with its transcendent blessings will not be ushered in until another week of seventy-year periods has passed. Israel's probation is to be prolonged in the hope of a reformation that could fulfill all the divine plan

originally mapped out for the "kingdom of priests" (Ex 19:6).

Daniel could not but have recognized that the new prophecy threatened bane as well as blessing. While the first words were those of glorious promise, the last were dire and depressing. They seemed to say that if the returning Jews failed again in this last time of probation and instead of preparing the world for the Messiah they so hardened in their self-righteousness as to turn both themselves and the Gentiles against the long-awaited Redeemer, then they and their city and temple would be destroyed once more, and this time forever. Thus the *restoration of the sanctuary promised earlier (8:14), and due to transpire at "the time of the end" (8:17), must point to something much grander than the rebuilding of a desecrated holy place, even to a state of affairs resulting when the rejected and "cut off" Messiah somehow staged a comeback. Apparently the soon-coming restoration of the city and the temple after the return from Babylon would be but a shadow of the final restoration foretold by Jeremiah in his forecasts of the kingdom of God (see Jer 23:5, 6; 31:31-40).*

To recapitulate: The Daniel who receives the prophecy of 9:24-27 is one who expects word about the Messianic kingdom that he already anticipates (after reading Jeremiah) should follow the deliverance from the Babylonian captivity. After the vision recorded in chapter 8 he may have surmised that the restoration of the sanctuary and the time of the end there spoken of were, so to speak, even at the door, or at least to be fulfilled within about seven years after opposition that would come from the Greek world against the restored sanctuary. This was even a more likely view than his initial fear that the return of the Jews to their homeland was to be delayed for this period of 2300 days.

But with Gabriel's return comes also a new message that seems to say in effect: The deliverance from Babylon, the cleansing, repairing, restoring work at Jerusalem, and the establishment again of the sanctuary services are only shadows of a much greater plan. Daniel learns that there is to be yet a greater demonstration of divine forgiveness and redemption from a worse

captivity. A greater temple is to be anointed, and instead of there being a holy country such as Palestine, a world would dawn wherein everlasting righteousness would be brought in by a once-rejected Messiah.

The deliverance from Babylon prefigures the deliverance of a world by a Messiah who would end all sin, transgression, and iniquity. But all that Daniel and all men seek can be accomplished only by the Messiah's death. He must be "cut off" in order to "bring in" the blessings of heaven. Daniel's people would be somehow to blame for the cutting off of the Messiah, and as a result their holy city would suffer a like fate to that which marked the beginning of the exile in Babylon. The city and its sanctuary would be destroyed by the people of an invading prince, as by a flood. Desolating abominations would again be manifested in holy places as God permitted the heathen to desecrate the once sacred center of worship. And this would endure until the time of "the decreed end" when judgment would hail down upon the wicked as the prelude to the establishment of the Messiah's everlasting kingdom. Then would God Himself tabernacle with men, and the whole universe would be as a cleansed and hallowed temple, with all sin and transgression eradicated forever. This would fulfill all that had ever been foretold by both vision and prophet.

Such would be the meaning to Daniel of this second revelation made through Gabriel. The historical setting, plus his own reference to his study of the prophecies made by Jeremiah about the restoration, makes the above interpretation of his thoughts certain as to the general outline.

Contemplating the historical setting of 9:24-27, we should not fail to notice what would have been a startling paradox to the prophet. The initial verse is the richest promissory note Israel had ever been given, yet the rest of the passage, except for the mention of the Messiah and His confirmation of the covenant, seems to be negative. It is declared that an alien prince would devastate the rebuilt city and sanctuary and that the site would remain desolate during the period of prolonged war.

Thus what comes first is inferred as belonging

to the last.¹⁶ That is, we can read verse 24 after verse 27, as well as in its present position, to obtain its full significance, for it is quite certain that God's answer to Daniel, the man greatly beloved, was intended to be encouraging. He is told that the matters of his prayer will be resolved in the best possible way. Israel's transgressions will be atoned for, Israel's Messiah shall come, and although Israel's city and sanctuary will again be desolated, another sanctuary is to be dedicated as shown by the words "to anoint a most holy place." The word used here for "most holy" is rendered "sanctuary" in verse 26 and 8:13, 14.

Although the rebuilt sanctuary following the exile would again suffer devastation if Israel continued to fail, God intended to replace it with a permanent one. Undoubtedly Daniel would think of this in connection with such promises made through Jeremiah, that the day would come when all would know God "from the least . . . to the greatest" (Jer 31:34). In that day all God's people would dwell securely under the reign of One who would establish everlasting righteousness in the earth (see Jer 23:5, 6).

But now the problem—how could God bless Israel eternally if she rejected the Messiah? How could these blessings and curses both prove true? Only the New Testament and the later unfolding of history would solve the enigma. A second Israel and a second coming of the Messiah would both be necessary for the full accomplishment of all foretold by Gabriel.

Again we should also be aware that for Daniel this revelation paralleled the one in chapter 8. The earlier vision had implied a rebuilding of the sanctuary after the return from captivity, only to be followed by the attacks and devastation of "the little horn." But then also there had been a word of promise similar to the expanded list of 9:24. "For two thousand and three hundred evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state." It is not said that the old ruins would be built up again. This new sanctuary is from above, belonging to the long-awaited kingdom to be ushered in by the Messiah, not now an earthly building but a state of things wherein eternal holiness prevails¹⁷ (cf. Rev 21:3).

2. *The Literary Context of 9:24-27*

We will now consider the relationship between 8 and 9 in more detail, that of verses 1-23 and 24-27 of chapter 9, and between 9:24-27 and the final prophecy of the book. These three sets of literary relationships cast considerable light on the central prophecy.

Interestingly, a number of scholars regard the prophecy as an appendix to chapter 8.¹⁸ In 8:16 Gabriel was told to make Daniel to understand the vision that had just been given. The explanation then begun was interrupted by Daniel's collapse before Gabriel had explained the significance of the high point of the vision, namely verse 14. No "what" or "when" as to the fulfillment of this was given to the prophet. A number of writers regard the fainting as a literary device introduced to sustain the interest of readers and to render the following chapter more significant.¹⁹ However, the historical fact is that Daniel was allowed by God to search and supplicate for further light for at least ten more years—until the dawning of the year which was to terminate the captivity. Then as the aged captive again besought his God the answer came.

The connection between the new prophecy and the old is clearly made. Daniel tells us that his visitor was "the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the first"—at the time of Dan 8. And the angel's first words link precisely with Daniel's concern. "O Daniel, I have now come out to give you wisdom and understanding; . . . therefore consider the word and understand the vision." Gabriel's next words continue the interpretation previously begun. He now speaks of the *what* and the *when* intended by the "restoring" or "vindicating" of the sanctuary. It is significant that even liberal critics see in 8:14 and 9:24 promises of the restoration of the kingdom of God. Says Barr:

With the end of the time comes the full restoration which was still awaited from Nebuchadnezzar's time; . . . it is a restoration of the holy place and the holiness and righteousness which have their centre in it, and with this difference from the situation before 586 B.C., that an end is now made of the sin and iniquity which brought destruction on the holy city of old.²⁰

The meaning of the time limit is to be the eradication of sin, the completion of atonement, the establishment of an everlasting right order and a holy sanctuary.²¹

We turn now to the relationship between the first twenty-three verses of chapter 9 and the last four, that is, the relationship between the narrative consisting chiefly of Daniel's prayer and the prophecy that followed.

3a. *Key Words*

Far too often the prayer has been almost idly passed over. Yet *most of the key words of the prophecy are here to be found*. Study the usage of "thy people," "thy city" (15, 16, 24); "transgression" (11, 24); "sins" and "iniquity" (5, 8, 13, 15, 16, 20, 24); "righteousness" (7, 14, 16, 24); the "city" and the "sanctuary" (16, 17, 18, 19, 26); "desolations" (17, 26, 27); "confirm" (12, 27), "covenant" (4, 27). The parallelism is more extensive still, inasmuch as that part of the narrative outside the prayer also contains words or concepts similar to or identical with the prophetic portion. For example, in verse 2 we have not only reference to the seventy years, which are soon to be extended sevenfold, but we have "desolations" and "end," key terms in the prophecy. Again, "sacrifice" in verse 21 matches the same word in verse 27.

Why are these parallelisms significant? *They testify that any interpretation of 24-27 ignoring the themes present in 1-23 must be erroneous.*²² The prayer pleads for divine intervention, for forgiveness, for the restoring of the sanctuary and the city. It is an impassioned plea for the accomplishment of all the good things Jeremiah had predicted would follow the end of the exile. In other words, the narrative section of this chapter demands that the prophecy relate to the Messianic era when all the ancient prophecies, and the more recent ones, should be fulfilled. This, of course, immediately excludes any interpretation that applies the verses merely to Maccabean times. It also excludes any interpretation that places its major emphasis on the antichrist, as though he rather than the Christ filled the picture. And furthermore, it would seem to exclude any interpretation that omits the ideal reign of God—the kingdom of glory.

Next we shall consider the third set of literary relationships, namely the parallels between the final section of Daniel (chapters 10-12) and 9:24-27. It is always important to take into account what is written immediately *after* the passage being studied, as well as that written *before*. In this instance the following lengthy prophecy is but an expansion of the present brief forecast. Note these examples:

9:22, 23: "I have now come out to give you wisdom and understanding; . . . therefore . . . understand the vision."

10:13, 14: "I . . . came to make you understand. . . . For the vision is for days yet to come."

9:25 concerns the rebuilding of the city and sanctuary during the days of Medo-Persia.

10:1-11:2 also relates to the time of Medo-Persia and the time of conflict over the rebuilding program in Jerusalem.

9:24: "Seventy weeks of years are decreed concerning your people and your holy city."

11: At least the first half of this later chapter is a discussion of the experiences of Israel during this period of almost 500 years.

9:24-27 concerns Messiah the prince who confirms the covenant.

11:22 also speaks of "the prince of the covenant," and 12:1 even names the prince (see also 10:13, 21). Chapter 10 has at its center a description of the prince mentioned in 9:25.

9:26: The prince "shall be cut off."

11:22: The "prince of the covenant" to be "broken."

9:26 speaks of antichrist desolating the city and the sanctuary.

11:31-35 foretells the same.

9:26 foretells that desolations will continue till the end.

11:35 and 12:11-13 do likewise.

9:27 speaks of the time when "the decreed end is poured out on the desolator."

11:36 promises that divine indignation will fall upon the desolating king, in harmony with the divine decrees. (The Hebrew for "decreed" and "determined" is the same.) 11:45 describes this event.

The study of the parallels between 9:24-27 and the closing prophecy of the book contributes to the exegesis of each. It is interesting to note that both extend till "the end." This word occurs at least four times in chapter 9 (we say "at least," for synonyms are also present that actually double the number) and seven times in chapters 11 and 12. "The end" in chapter 12 is the time of deliverance and glory. The promises of 9:24 appear to point to just such a denouement.

3b. Key Words

We have already referred to various key words that are present not only in 9:24-27 but also in the preceding prayer. A number of such words are again present in the later prophecy of chapters 10-12. Not only "end" but "covenant," "abomination," "desolate," "understand," "everlasting," "righteousness," "thy people," "destroy," "decreed," or like words can be found in each section. Compare, for example, "covenant" in 9:27 with its fourfold use in 11:22, 28, 30, 32.

Without doubt the word most common to these two prophecies is *end*. Jesus used the term when He later expounded the theme of 9:24-27.¹³

4. The New Testament Usage of Dan 9:24-27

Many exegetes have pointed out that Christ's discourse on the end of the world (Mt 24, Mk 13, Lk 21) is a midrash upon Daniel. It has often been shown that, apart from the reference to the Son of man, for the most part the Olivet discourse by its allusions is interpreting Dan 9:24-27 and also its expansion in 11:31 to the end of the book. Jewry in Christ's time regarded these passages as prophecies awaiting complete fulfillment, and judging from Mk 13 and other texts, Christ was a typical Son of His age in this respect.

Note that 9:24-27 is the only passage in Daniel that clearly links the ravaging of the city and temple with the ushering in of the eschatological kingdom, and just such a connection is implied in the Olivet sermon.

The Book of Daniel thus anticipated that the final end of sin and the ushering in of everlasting righteousness, plus the anointing of the Messianic temple, would succeed the greatest crisis of the

ages—namely the attack of the antichrist upon Jerusalem, its temple, and its people (see Mt 24:15-27). Both 9:24-27 and the presentation of 11:31-12:13 picture the Messianic era as being precipitated by the antichrist's onslaught on the "holy mountain." Thus Mk 13 presents the same sequence of events as the Old Testament apocalypse. Johannes Weiss has commented:

Indeed Jesus himself may have imagined the future according to the form of the Jewish eschatological expectations. Just as he has followed Daniel's prophecy with his presentation of the Messiah, so also in other matters concerning the future [would] the teachings of apocalyptic have been authoritative for him.²⁴

The evidence is overwhelming that the New Testament teaches that 9:24-27 was not accomplished in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes. Christ saw in the prophecy an allusion to the fate of the city (Jerusalem) and the world which would reject Him. He applied the "abomination of desolation" in 9:27 first to pagan Rome's attack on Jerusalem in AD 70 and second to antichrist's attack on the church just before the end of time. Christian expositors can do no other than follow their Master's exegesis.²⁵

Questions Answered

Having looked at the special helps to interpretation of the key passage, we can approach the pivotal questions raised earlier.

1. *What is the relationship, if any, between the 2300 days and the seventy weeks?*

Our discussions regarding Daniel's probable thoughts on 9:24-27 and the literary context of that passage have indicated what scores of commentators came to see in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—that 9:24-27 continues the explanation of 8:1-14, and that the seventy weeks of years constitute the first portion of the 2300 years. As noted, we have the same angel in both

accounts, and his first words in chapter 9 refer the prophet to the preceding vision. Furthermore, the theme is similar in both chapters as the fate of the sanctuary is discussed. Particularly does 9:24 seem relevant to the "what" and the "when" of the event promised in 8:14. Thus 9:24 would be parallel not only to 8:14 but also to 2:44, 45; 7:9-13, 26, 27; 12:1-3 as regarding its eschatological application. (This does not, of course, deny its primary application to the legal results of Calvary.)

The "when" is indicated by the starting point given in verse 25 (see the commentary on 9:24 for discussion of the unique word used for "decreed" in verse 24). All Hebraists assert that its literal meaning is "cut off." The seventy weeks of years are "cut off" from the longer period of 2300 years, and they commence with "the going forth of the word to restore and build Jerusalem."

Further evidence of this connection between chapters 8 and 9 is present in an unusual expression found at the doorway of Gabriel's message. "The man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the first, came to me in swift flight" (9:21). The last phrase, "in swift flight," has aroused the curiosity of many commentators. Keil declares that the existing translation "is without any foundation in the words, and was probably derived by the old translators from a confounding of . . . [ya'eph] with . . . [ûph]. . . . [Ya'eph] means only *wearied, to become tired*, . . . but nowhere *to run*."²⁶ He continues:

According to this interpretation, which the words alone admit of, the expression is applicable, not to the angel, whom, as an unearthly being, we cannot speak of as being wearied. . . . On the contrary, the words perfectly agree with the condition of Daniel described in ch. viii. 17f., 27, and Daniel mentions this circumstance, because Gabriel, at his former coming to him, not only helped to strengthen him, but also gave him understanding of the vision, which was to him hidden in darkness, so that his appearing again at once awakened joyful hope.²⁷

Some more recent commentators make the same point, and the New English Bible supports it

by a footnote.²⁸ Thus the connection between chapters 8 and 9 of Daniel is undeniable. We are intended to see the 490 years of 9:24 as the beginning section of the period named in the previous chapter. All of which agrees with the fact often referred to by interpreters—namely that after 8:14, the rest of the prophecies of the book are in literal language devoted to the exposition of the symbols of 8:1-14. The reader should particularly study Leupold's discussion of the intimate relation between chapters 8 and 9.²⁹

2. Does this prophecy contain eschatological elements? And if so, are these present by way of direct statement or only in the sense of an apotelesmatic fulfillment?

To some extent the present issue has been prejudged by our comments regarding the special helps to the interpretation of this prophecy. Nevertheless, the matter requires detailed attention at this point.

First, it should be obvious that our answer to the previous question seems to demand a negative reply to the present one, inasmuch as the seventy weeks of years constitute the first part of the 2300 years. But our conclusion cannot be reached that quickly. Heretofore each prophecy (chapters 2, 7, 8) has climaxed in the presentation of the kingdom of glory. This is acknowledged by almost all for chapters 2 and 7 at least, but also by a large number for chapter 8.

Yet many, though by no means all, evangelical expositors declare that the present passage sets forth the kingdom of grace only. They see the sentence that begins the prophecy and that at face value encompasses the objectives of the whole plan of salvation—which will be realized by both advents—as applying to the First Advent alone—and this despite the fact that the language echoes the wording of prior passages concerning the end time. (Compare 9:24 “to bring in everlasting righteousness” with 2:44 and 7:27 as well as 12:2—all of which speak of the everlasting kingdom established at the close of the age.)

The initial problem can be summarized: The

other prophecies of Daniel point to the end of time, and therefore it would seem probable that this one beginning with a similar starting point to the others and employing similar language should also reach their terminal.

Second, the problem intensifies for those who deny this likelihood when we remember that the overwhelming weight of scholarship affirms that Christ in His Olivet discourse applied this prophecy to the end of the age. Several of the phrases and concepts found in 9:24-27 reoccur in Mt 24, Mk 13, and Lk 21. These include the repeated stress on “the end” (these words or their equivalent occur at least seven times in 9:24-27 and about ten times in Mt 24), the reference to the destruction of the city and the temple, and the allusion to “the abomination of desolation” (see Mt 24:1-3, 15, KJV). These applications are made by Christ not only in connection with AD 70 but also in relation to the experience of the church at the end of the world.

Third, Dan 9 is avowedly an explanation of that part of Dan 8 that concerns the restoring (vindicating, cleansing) of the sanctuary at “the time of the end” (see 8:17). Therefore, of necessity, it must dilate upon these eschatological themes.

Fourth, the closing words of the prophecy are a parallel to other passages of Scripture undoubtedly speaking of the final events. Compare the following:

8:19: “The latter end of the indignation . . . pertains to the appointed time of the end.”

9:27: “Until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.”

7:26: “His dominion shall be . . . destroyed to the end.”

2:44: “It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end.”

11:35, 36: “The time of the end, . . . the time appointed, . . . till the indignation is accomplished; for what is determined shall be done.”

(See also Is 10:23-25 and Rev 14:10.)

It should be emphasized that the final events foretold in this prophecy extend beyond the 490 years allocated to Israel, regardless of which school of interpretation one follows. Certain things are predicted that are not linked by time to any of the "weeks." Verse 26 speaks of the destruction of Jerusalem, and verse 27 asserts that there will ensue abominations until the end. This statement parallels the conclusion of the previous verse, "to the end . . . desolations are decreed." Both passages are thus reminiscent of the revelation of the preceding chapter that pictured the sanctuary suffering from "the transgression that makes desolate" until "the time of the end" (8:13, 17).

Theodotus has for 9:27: "And upon the temple (shall be) the abomination of desolations, and till (at) the end of the time an end is set (given) to the desolation." This parallels even more closely the prediction regarding the desolations of the sanctuary in chapter 8. The New Testament borrows from these verses and applies them to both the fate of literal Jerusalem and that of the church, "the holy city" (see Lk 21:24; Rev 11:2).

The very last words of chapter 9 should be closely observed in this connection. They speak of "the decreed end" which according to most exegetes is an allusion to Is 10:22-25, that speaks of a decreed end to affect "all the earth" as God's indignation is poured out upon the wicked.³⁰ Thus the close of chapter 9 is actually a reference to the final divine indignation upon sin and sinners, and Wright is undoubtedly correct when he writes, "The prophecy runs on to the end of the world."³¹ Leupold speaks similarly on 9:24:

The six statements that follow cover the sum total of the purposes of God with man. Besides, when they are taken as a whole, and when the absolute character of all of them is noted, they are seen actually to cover the perfect consummation of the Messiah's work that will be achieved when the second coming and the judgment have transpired.³²

And Keil:

This revelation presents the principal outlines of the development of the kingdom of God from the time of Daniel to its consummation at the end of this epoch of the world.³³

Such an interpretation is not only indicated by the New Testament but has been recognized by many in the church from the times of Hippolytus and Apollinaris. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries a steady stream of expositors has taken this position—Hofmann, Delitzsch, Leyrer, Thomson, Fausset, Keil, and a host of others. We have not named dispensationalists who also recognize this truth but mar it by unsound exegetical method.

Before leaving this question we would draw attention to an unusual word in verse 27. It is *kalah*, which can mean either complete accomplishment—in the sense of perfecting—or complete devastation. To see the contrast, study Jer 16:4; Ps 39:11; Ex 39:32; 1 Ki 6:38. In these passages the same word is translated as "perish," "consume," "finished." In 2 Chr 12:12 it means "a complete destruction," whereas in Gen 2:2 it means a completion of creation. At times it means "destroy" as indicated, and in other cases "made ready." It is also used in the sense of fulfillment, as of a prophecy (see Ezr 1:1; Dan 12:7).

In Dan 9:27 it is translated "consummation" by the KJV and "end" by the RSV. The KJV is here to be preferred, inasmuch as the more common word for "end" in Dan 9 is *qes*, which means an end in the sense of an extremity of space or time. The former is the more absolute term, and its cognate is found in verse 24 in connection with the "finishing" of transgression; so at the beginning and the close of this remarkable prophecy we have a term betokening an absolute finish—a consummation of all that has taken place hitherto. The evidence of the context and of other scriptures, as we have seen, is that this word promises the complete abolition of sin in the last judgment, and the complete establishment of everlasting righteousness in the kingdom to come.

Thus 9:24-27 undoubtedly has eschatological elements and not merely by way of apotelesmatic fulfillment. Because of the close relationship between this passage and the prophecy concerning "the time of the end" (8:14-17), this is just what we would expect.

While we are in no wise dependent upon the apotelesmatic principle in this issue, its evidence should not be neglected. The fact that the Old

Testament usually merges the two advents into a single picture is an illustration of this principle, and it applies here. The prophecies fulfilled at the First Advent in the kingdom of grace are consummated in the kingdom of glory. But there is yet another significant factor to take into account. The Book of Revelation clearly teaches that *the chain of events at the close of the Old Testament age prefigures a similar set of events on a vaster scale toward the close of the present dispensation.* This has been elaborated by writers such as Niles, Guinness, Wordsworth, Lightfoot, Berkhof, Gaston, and others.³⁴ We will content ourselves with a few illustrations.

When Rev 11 describes the final attack upon Christ's church (His "two witnesses," the guardians of the Old and New Testaments), it uses language reminiscent of Christ's last days at the close of the Old Testament dispensation. Similarly Mt 24 speaks of all that preceded the destruction of the Old Testament temple in AD 70 as typical of events prior to the destruction of the world. When Austin Farrer, Jeremias, and others discuss this chapter of the Gospels, they stress the apotelesmatic principle.

Furthermore the Book of Revelation in such passages as Rev 14:7, 8 alludes to the history of Israel and her removal from ancient Babylon to restore the temple. Such passages (from KJV) as "come out of her, my people" and "the hour of his judgment is come" are quotations from the Book of Jeremiah concerning Israel's experience at the time of the restoration. *The events at the beginning of the 2300 days are evidently typical of the events at the close.* The beginning of that period marks the call for true worshipers to forsake Babylon and rally around the sanctuary of God and the holy law belonging to it. The work of the exiles in rebuilding the sanctuary was typical of the work of the saints who repair the breach in the wall of God's law in the last days (see Is 58:12-14). One writer has aptly linked the rebuilding of the typical holy places with the latter-day restoration of truth as follows:

The work of restoration and reform carried on by the returned exiles, under the leadership of Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, presents a picture

of a work of spiritual restoration that is to be wrought in the closing days of this earth's history. The remnant of Israel were a feeble people, exposed to the ravages of their enemies; but through them God purposed to preserve in the earth a knowledge of Himself and of His law. They were the guardians of the true worship, the keepers of the holy oracles. . . .

The spiritual restoration of which the work carried forward in Nehemiah's day was a symbol, is outlined in the words of Isaiah: "They shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities." . . .

The prophet here describes a people who, in a time of general departure from truth and righteousness, are seeking to restore the principles that are the foundation of the kingdom of God. They are repairers of a breach that has been made in God's law—the wall that He has placed around His chosen ones for their protection. . . .

In the time of the end every divine institution is to be restored.³⁵

Only by seeing the typical import of the key events at the time of the restoration from Babylon (such as the coming of the kings from the east and the drying up of the Euphrates) can one understand the eschatological symbols in such passages as Rev 16:12 and comprehend the message of the Bible's last book for the church of the end of time.

Not only is it true that the events at the beginning of the 2300 days parallel the events at the close of the 2300 days, but events at the close of the first section of the 2300 days (that is, the 490-year period) also parallel the events that take place at the end of time. Toward the close of the seventy weeks the professed religious people of the age united with the state to crucify the Sinless One, who was proclaiming the law and gospel of God. The loud cry (triumphant entry) of Christ's ministry was rejected. The nation grieved away the Holy Spirit, and it was left desolate. Christ Himself experienced "a little time of trouble" in Gethsemane when the death decree had been made against Him, and then the longer "time of trouble" through the official trials and the ensuing cross. God's judgments against sin were manifested at Calvary in the plagues of darkness, earthquake, thirst. But then came ultimate deliverance (cf. Rev 13-19).³⁶

In contrast to this deliverance of the Innocent

One, the transgressions of God's professed people resulted in the approach of "the abomination of desolation" (Mt 24:15, KJV) against the sanctuary and the consequent overflowing of divine judgment. So it will be at the end of time.

The essence of the typical teaching of the events in Daniel's day is summed up in the following quotations:

Today the church of God is free to carry forward to completion the divine plan for the salvation of a lost race. For many centuries God's people suffered a restriction of their liberties. The preaching of the gospel in its purity was prohibited, and the severest of penalties were visited upon those who dared disobey the mandates of men. . . . God's church on earth was as verily in captivity during this long period of relentless persecution as were the children of Israel held captive in Babylon during the period of the exile.

But, thank God, His church is no longer in bondage. *To spiritual Israel have been restored the privileges accorded the people of God at the time of their deliverance from Babylon.* In every part of the earth, men and women are responding to the Heaven-sent message which John the revelator prophesied would be proclaimed prior to the second coming of Christ: "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come." Rev 14:7.

No longer have the hosts of evil power to keep the church captive; for "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city"; . . . and to spiritual Israel is given the message, "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Verse 8; 18:4. As the captive exiles heeded the message, "flee out of the midst of Babylon," . . . and were restored to the Land of Promise, so those who fear God today are heeding the message to withdraw from spiritual Babylon, and soon they are to stand as trophies of divine grace in the earth made new, the heavenly Canaan.³⁷

By way of summary we would repeat what has been earlier said in this section. The New Testament indicates that events at the beginning of the 2300 days are typical of the events at the close. Similarly the New Testament uses the events at the close of the first section of the 2300 days (that is, at the close of the 490-year period) to portray events at the end of time. What happened in connection with Christ, the Head, will likewise transpire in connection with the church, His body. The

awareness of the teaching of the New Testament in these respects has led some, as we have seen, to endeavor to stretch the seventy weeks from the time of the return from Babylon till the end of the world. Such an interpretation should never be presented as the primary meaning of the prophecy, and it is legitimate only within the bounds of typology and the apotelesmatic principle.

3. Is 9:24-27 conditional in any of its aspects?

Jer 17 and 18 are relevant for this issue. In 17:21-27 the continued existence of the city is declared to be contingent upon the obedience of the people, particularly with reference to Sabbath-keeping. Jerusalem was to stand forever if its people gave God His place. Otherwise it was to be destroyed by fire. The following chapter speaks as follows:

The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: "Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words." So I went down to the potter's house, and there he was working at his wheel. And the vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter's hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to do.

Then the word of the Lord came to me: "O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter has done? says the Lord. Behold, like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. If at any time I declare concerning a nation or a kingdom, that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, and if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will repent of the evil that I intended to do it. And if at any time I declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will build and plant it, and if it does evil in my sight, not listening to my voice, then I will repent of the good which I had intended to do to it" (Jer 18:1-10).

Need Jerusalem have been destroyed in 586 BC or AD 70? The above chapters from Jeremiah, written before the first destruction of the city, distinctly say no to our question. And in the New Testament, passages such as Lk 19:41-44 indicate the same answer. Had Israel known the things that belonged to her peace, the city of Jerusalem could have stood forever. Because these things were hidden from her eyes, the days would come when her enemies would destroy her. God's ideal plan

provided that all the world should be prepared for Christ's first advent. And had the world been thus prepared by Israel for the Messiah, then the setting up of the kingdom of glory would have speedily transpired. The wording of 9:24 indicates that the 490 years was a period of further probation for the Jews. It was their last chance nationally. The blessings there pronounced could have been Israel's in full had she accepted the Messiah. The dire threat regarding the abolition of the temple need not have been fulfilled any more than Jonah's threat against Nineveh. Whenever Jerusalem was faithful to God, it was impregnable.

Thus 9:24 in its primary reference was a promise that if Israel were faithful, all her transgressions would be no more and her welcomed Messiah would bless the nation and its proselytes from the world with everlasting righteousness. Furthermore, the passage indicates that all this could have happened by the close of the seventy weeks of years. Had the whole world been prepared by Israel for the first coming of Christ, the ratification of the covenant and the establishment of the kingdom of glory would have followed in quick succession. One commentary has suggested:

If the nation had been faithful to its trust and had appreciated the high destiny reserved for it by God, the whole earth would have awaited the coming of the Messiah with eager expectancy. He would have come, He would have died, and would have risen again. Jerusalem would have become a great missionary center, and the earth would have been set ablaze with the light of truth in one grand, final appeal to those who had not as yet accepted the invitation of divine mercy.³⁹

The same commentary in another place suggests:

At any one of various critical points in the history of this world, divine justice could have proclaimed, "It is done!" and Christ might have come to inaugurate His righteous reign. Long ago He might have brought to fruition His plans for the redemption of this world. As God offered Israel the opportunity to prepare the way for His eternal kingdom upon the earth, when they settled the Promised Land and again when they returned from their exile in Babylon, so

He gave the church of apostolic times the privilege of completing the gospel commission.⁴⁰

It is significant that the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple is placed *outside* the seventy weeks. This was because of its contingent nature. Gabriel spoke of the future, both as it would be if Israel continued her present course of compromise (see last half of both verses 26 and 27), and as it might be if she repented during her last probationary opportunity and accepted the Messiah (verse 24).

In the conditional nature of certain elements of this prophecy we have the answer to the charges made by dispensationalists and others against the viewing of the seventy weeks as 490 continuous years. Walvoord says against the latter interpretation that it has an "Achilles' heel." It "finds literal fulfillment of the first sixty-nine and one-half sevens, but no fulfillment of the climax."⁴⁰

Leupold says of those who wish to speak in terms of 490 literal years:

All they have left for the last week and the consummation of the seventy year-weeks is an unimportant date seven years after Christ's death, when something so unimportant happened that the commentators are at a loss as to what they should point to. That interpretation runs out into sand. No one has yet advanced a halfway satisfactory answer as to why such a termination of a glorious work should be selected to close the computation.⁴¹

It is indeed true that the prophecy itself suggests no other climax to the seventy-week period than that suggested in verse 24 itself. No earthly concrete event is referred to as marking the 490th year. And commentaries dealing with the problem are not very convincing.

We suggest that the principle outlined in Jer 17 and 18—that God's pronouncements, whether they be blessings or cursings, are conditional—answers the above criticisms. Verse 24 tells what could be by the end of the 490 years if Israel were faithful. Verses 26 and 27 tell what would be at a later date, beyond the appointed probationary period, if Israel failed the test. The emphasis is upon warning, and thus most of the statements in 24-27 are negative as far as Israel is concerned.

Therefore, because of this conditional element, no precise single event is given as marking off the end of the 490 years. As far as Israel was concerned the cutting off of the Messiah would seal her fate, though that fact was not fully manifested for another three and a half years, at the end of which time the messengers of grace turned away from the chosen nation to the despised Gentiles. The very haziness of the terminal point indicates the conditional nature of 9:24-27.

When Christ called out a new Israel, as the old set itself to reject Him, He likewise spoke of the future in terms of what could be if the new Israel proved entirely faithful.

Note the following:

When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next; for truly, I say to you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel, before the Son of man comes (Mt 10:23).

And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see that the kingdom of God has come with power" (Mk 9:1).

Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away before all these things take place (Mk 13:30).

The fulfillment of these promises was contingent upon the faithful discharge of duty by the new Israel. This is clearly taught by Mt 24:14. We know of no evidence that as far as the early Christian's thinking was concerned, the task allotted to the disciples and the early church could not have been completed within that generation.⁴²

4. *Is the phrase "seventy weeks" to be interpreted as signifying 490 years, or is it symbolic of the whole period between Israel's departure from Babylon and the end of time?*

Keil, Kliefoth, Young, Leupold, and others "refuse to attempt an exact counting of years."⁴³ Says Leupold:

Now, since the week of creation, "seven" has always been the mark of divine work in the symbolism of numbers. "Seventy" contains seven multiplied by ten, which, being a round number, signifies perfection, completion. Therefore, "seventy heptads"—7 x 7 x 10—is the period in which the divine work of greatest moment is brought to

perfection. There is nothing fantastic or unusual about this to the interpreter who has seen how frequently the symbolism of numbers plays a significant part in the Scriptures.⁴⁴

What should be said of such exegesis? First, it is not neophytes who make the suggestion. The scholars who take this position belong to the first rank. Their advocacy cannot be taken lightly. But the outstanding weakness in any position asserting the symbolic meaning of the weeks as the sole meaning is that such a stance is more reminiscent of Origen than of standard historical grammatical interpretation.

Origen devised "spiritual" interpretations for the "difficult" passages of Scripture, thus rendering their literal historical meaning null and void. The Reformers on the other hand looked first at the literal meaning indicated by the historical setting and the actual terminology grammatically understood. The meaning thus yielded was held as cardinal. After the ascertaining of the literal meaning, they inquired whether a spiritual sense might also be implied. Kevan has summed up the situation admirably:

The crux of the problem raised by the allegorical method is whether secret and independent senses of Scripture exist, as it were, in their own right—or whether there is but one sense only, from which derivative senses may be inferred. Only the second of these alternatives can meet the demands of the facts. Scripture is not *multiplex*, but *simplex*; and this unity of meaning resides in the grammatical sense. This grammatical or literal meaning forms the basis of derivative meanings, and in relation to these subsequent interpretations the grammatical and literal must be regarded as primary while the others are secondary. The School of Antioch and such teachers as Augustine, Luther and Calvin have always insisted that the theological sense is found only in the literal.

That Scripture contains inner and deeper meanings must not be denied; for the Bible is no ordinary book and has the profundities of the mind of God in it. While, therefore, allegorization in the strict sense must be repudiated, the search for an inner significance of a homological or typical kind must be held to be part of the legitimate study of the Bible.⁴⁵

All must admit that the face value meaning of

9:24 relates to literal time. The divisions seem to have little meaning unless this is the case. Very few endeavor to find a "spiritual" meaning for the number 62. While it is true that the Hebrew word for "weeks" (*shabim*) does not necessarily mean a week of years, it is also true that Daniel had just been studying Jeremiah's prophecy of the seventy years, and that the present revelation has some evident reference to that period. As seventy years were the term of the captivity, so seven times seventy years was to constitute Israel's new period of probation.

A week of days could not have been meant inasmuch as the events foretold could never have been fulfilled within 490 days, particularly the rebuilding of the city that was allotted seven weeks only. On the other hand, Israel was familiar with the concept of the jubilee ushered in after every period of seven weeks of years. That joyful occasion spoke of release, forgiveness, and restoration—the very themes upon which Gabriel now speaks. Jewish and classical writers long prior to the days of Christ give evidence of familiarity with weeks of years.

Furthermore, if this period is "cut off" from a longer period of 2300 years, then it must be specific in length and cannot apply to all of subsequent time. It is appropriate that this chapter, which begins the literal explanation of the symbols of chapter 8, should speak in terms of years, and yet do so in terms of what Hengstenberg called "concealed definiteness." The weeks indeed are weeks of years, but the term chosen ideally relates to the language of "evening-morning" days found in the preceding chapter.

We have therefore in 9:24-27 a prophecy asserting a specific period of time for the accomplishing of specific matters. A definite starting point is provided, and events are mentioned according to their place of occurrence in the continuum. All of which would seem most unnecessary if the times were only to be understood symbolically.

Last, the actual fulfillment in terms of years demonstrates the literal meaning of the chronological features. It was indeed "seventy weeks of years" from the "going forth of the word to restore and build Jerusalem" to the end of that unique

period of seven years that witnessed the ministry and death of the Messiah and the offer of His gospel to impenitent Israel. It would be an amazing coincidence, indeed, if it just happened to be 490 years from the point stressed in Ezr 6:14 (the completion of the divine decree regarding the rebuilding of the holy places as manifested in the decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus in 457 BC) to that other point when the early church recognized in the stoning of their first martyr the sealing of Jewish impenitence!

Nevertheless we wish to endorse the wise words of Price when he wrote the following:

Many peoples of ancient times, the Romans and the Greeks scarcely less than the Hebrews, were fond of dwelling on the mystic meanings of numbers. Such persons must have found much pleasure, if not instruction, in comparing the seventy years of the Babylonian captivity with the 70 x 7 years spoken of in this prophecy with its many subdivisions, and then comparing all of these with the "seven times more" (Leviticus 26:18), which was the term God used in His threat to chastise the Israelites for their sins. It is probably true that some mystical values of seven do enter into these predictions.⁴⁴

That some scholars have been prepared to settle for the symbolic understanding of the seventy weeks is not strange, for the whole setting of this wonderful prophecy is, as might be expected, rich in typical elements. Israel is about to be redeemed from Babylon as the evidence of the divine forgiveness of her sins. A man of God, against whom no sin is recorded, is pictured as taking upon himself the sin and guilt of the nation and pleading before God on their behalf. To him, at 3 PM, the hour of sacrifice, an angel appears with Heaven's promise of redemption. Assurance is given that he is "greatly beloved" and that his intercessions will not be in vain. None can read the account thoughtfully without seeing the shadows of a greater redemption, and a greater forgiveness, as the result of One greater than Daniel taking upon Himself the guilt of all men. The visit of the angel to strengthen the prophet is strongly reminiscent of the angel who visited heaven's beloved in Gethsemane to strengthen the Petitioner to drain the cup. And last, the numbers are

rich in symbolic import. $7 \times 7 \times 10$ would remind every Jew of the perfection and completeness of Yahweh's work. The years that led to each jubilee are here multiplied by ten, intimating the grandest Jubilee of all time as a result of the Messiah's work. Both the theocracy from the time of Israel in Egypt and the monarchy had experienced a similar length of probationary time.

Thus the narrative account of the setting of the prophecy of 9:24-27 thoroughly accords with the principle earlier noted, namely that the historical situation itself is a key to the meaning of the prophecy delivered within it. None of the symbolic elements (the imminent restoration of Israel, the intercession of her beloved prophet, the hour of the evening sacrifice, the numbers assigned to the chronological periods), however, deny the actuality and literality of the events underlying the symbolism. There *was* a nation about to be restored, there *was* a beloved prophet interceding for her, and the promises *would* be accomplished within seventy weeks of years.

We have come to our last question in the series: *Is literal Israel only addressed by this prophecy or does it pertain also to spiritual Israel—the church?*

The reader should keep in mind the claim of dispensationalists that prophecy is a ticking clock and that the clock ceased to tick at the time of the Triumphal Entry and will resume only when God resumes His direct dealings with Israel in their own land. Says Walvoord:

Unlike the prophecies of Daniel 2, 7, and 8, which primarily related to the Gentiles, this chapter is specifically God's program for the people of Israel, as Daniel would obviously interpret it. To make this equivalent to the church composed of both Jews and Gentiles is to read into the passage something foreign to the whole thinking of Daniel. The church as such has no relation to the city nor to the promises given specifically to Israel relating to their restoration and repossession of the land.⁴⁷

We have earlier pointed out that 1 Pe 1:9-12 (addressed to Christians and declaring that the prophets of old recorded matters for the church they did not fully understand) particularly has

Daniel in focus. He was the prophet who, more than all others, inquired and searched diligently concerning the times mentioned by visiting angels. Thus we must disagree with Walvoord when he says that Dan 9:24-27 cannot be for the church inasmuch as Daniel would not have understood it so. Peter asserted that Daniel and his fellow prophets *did* write for the church, and this in spite of their own lack of complete understanding of their own messages.

Furthermore, when one reads 12:1 concerning the deliverance by Michael of His people during "a time of trouble, such as never has been," one is hard put to restrict this event to Daniel's literal people. Christ quotes the verse and applies it to the church (see Mt 24:21, 22). The scope of the passage in Dan 12, embracing as it does the resurrection and glorification of the saints, indicates the same breadth of application. We have noticed earlier in our study of principles of prophetic interpretation that Old Testament passages lose their literal, old-covenant meaning when applied to new-covenant times. Spiritual Israel replaced literal Israel at the cross (see Mt 21:42, 43; 1 Pe 1:4-10).

The claim that Israel has to be in the land for the clock of prophecy to tick falls foul of history. Israel was still in the land for nearly forty years after Christ's triumphal entry. Furthermore it could hardly be said that God really governed Israel during much of the preceding centuries. The Ptolemies, the Seleucids, and the Romans dominated their existence for the greater part of the seventy-week period. Oswald Allis remarks:

"The times of the Gentiles" are regarded by Dispensationalists as beginning with Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of Jerusalem. Hence this entire period was distinctly not a period when Israel was "governed by God." If the clock represents "Jewish" time, with Israel in the land and governed by God, how then could it tick at all during the entire period from 445 B. C. to A. D. 30? If they are logical, Dispensationalists must admit that the parenthesis which they discover between the 69th and 70th weeks is really a parenthesis (the Church age, broadly speaking) within a parenthesis (the times of the Gentiles). And what we maintain is, that on Dispensational principles the one parenthesis is no

more entitled to be called Jewish time than is the other. If the clock could tick during part of the times of the Gentiles, it could tick during the whole of it. If it stops at A. D. 30 or 33 instead of at A. D. 70, it does so quite arbitrarily.⁴⁶

Let us grant to the dispensationalists that the passage in question was primarily addressed to literal Israel. Had they prepared the world for Christ's first coming, as was their privilege, His sacrifice would have blotted out their national as well as personal guilt, and the restoration of all things would have followed the speedy proclamation of His atonement to the world. Verse 27, however, indicates what the situation would be if literal Israel rejected the Messiah. Not only would their city and sanctuary suffer, but the divine covenant would be taken from them and confirmed with the many from all nations who would by accepting the gospel become the new Israel.

Did the promises of verse 24 become null and void because literal Israel failed? By no means. Christ, by His sinless life, atoning death, and victorious resurrection made complete provision for the absolution of guilt from all men and for the bestowal of righteousness upon all. Legally, sin, Satan, and death were ended at the cross. But only at His return shall the actual accomplishment be entirely implemented and manifested. Where literal Israel failed, the Christian church is to succeed (see Mt 24:14). Thus 9:24 applies first to the era ushered in by Calvary and second to the eternal era ushered in at the end of time. The second sense parallels the promise of 8:14—"then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state." Thus Gabriel's commission to explain the vision of chapter 8 is fulfilled.

Approach to 9:24-27 Adopted by This Commentary

We are now in the position to comment further upon the last three schools of interpretation as far as this prophecy is concerned.⁴⁷ These schools are: (1) the group that applies the prophecy as a literal time period extending to the First Advent (thus verse 24 fits the First Advent only); (2) the group that applies the time period symbolically only, as a figurative representation of the experience of God's people from the time of the

restoration out of Babylon till the end of the world (this group emphasizes that verse 24 particularly applies to the end of the age and the establishment of the kingdom of glory); (3) the group that not only emphasizes the literality of the time period and the stress on the First Advent but sees also an application to the end of time (this group accepts the apotelesmatic principle whereby prophecy can have germinant fulfillment prior to the consummative fulfillment).

The evidence given in the preceding pages indicates that the first two groups are correct in what they affirm but not in what they deny. The truth therefore is more adequately represented by the third group, which alone makes provision for all the facts of the Scriptures.

Let us now restate what we believe to be the reconciling truth in all this. The literal period of 490 years from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem was to witness the triumphant atonement of Christ on the cross, an act guaranteeing the final establishment of the kingdom of God in glory. Since Calvary, the world is reckoned by Heaven as being in its last days. Legally, Satan and sin have been abolished. Thus Christ could say, "If any one keeps my word, he will never see death." And "now is the judgment of this world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast out." Just a few days later all heaven joined in the anthem: "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God . . . have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down" (Rev 12:10).

So far as God and heaven and all believers are concerned the kingdom was established at Calvary. All later events transpire as the natural outworking of that climactic achievement. To use Cullmann's famous analogy, Calvary was D-Day and the Second Advent will be V-Day. From Heaven's viewpoint, the root (Calvary), rather than the fruit (the kingdom of glory), is alone to be gloried in. Reality is seen through the prism of the cross. Thus 9:27 speaks of making "sacrifice and offering to cease." In legal fact it happened within the seventy weeks at Calvary, but in demonstrated reality it occurred a generation later in A.D. 70.

Here we see the truth of realized eschatology. C. H. Dodd and others have rightly seen in the New Testament the evidence of a kingdom already

arrived. Others have shown that a more appropriate name for this theological truth would be "inaugurated eschatology."

Furthermore, the kingdom of glory could indeed have followed hard upon the heels of the ratification of the new covenant at the cross. If Israel had prepared the world for the coming of the Messiah, all would soon have taken sides for or against Him, and the end would have come. The prophecy is so worded as to accommodate the resulting situation whether or not Israel proved faithful, though some elements would never have met with a literal fulfillment had Israel wholeheartedly served God.

With this in mind the contrasting positions of commentators can be reconciled. (This, of course, is not to approve exegetical monstrosities such as exist in certain dispensationalist literature.) We do indeed have here a prophecy extending to the end of the world. The restoration of the sanctuary promised in 8:14 is here embodied, or to say the same thing in another way, the judgment of 7:9-13 is embraced by this series of promises in verse 24f.

But the emphasis is placed on the glorious *means*—namely the atonement of Christ. The fulfillment of all the divine promises was made possible by the death of Him "who loved me and gave himself for me" (Gal 2:20). Christ's atonement alone is the ground for the justification (vindication, restoration) of believers both now and in the final judgment. This revelation to the seer of Babylon declared that the restitution of all things, symbolized as the restoration of the sanctuary, was to be made possible only by the Messiah's self-sacrifice in life and death. He alone is a Christian who glories in this fact alone.

¹ Guinness, *The Divine Programme of the World's History*, pp. 328, 329.

² Scott, p. 829.

³ See the discussion on the inaccuracy of the LXX of Daniel and the inadequacy of positions taken by rationalist critics.

⁴ Boufflower, pp. 170-175. See particularly the following quotation: "The Higher Critics were not the first commentators to refer this vision to the times of Antiochus Epiphanes and the heroic struggle of the Maccabees. The LXX took the same view of it, and showed their strong bias in a most remarkable way.

"The first twenty-three verses of this chapter will be found faithfully rendered in the Septuagint version, but when we come to the vision in vv 24-27, at the close of the chapter, the original prophecy becomes scarcely recognizable: the translator has turned commentator, and as we study his commentary we marvel at the ruthless way in which he has dismembered, defaced, and then put together again, so as to suit his own preconceived ideas, what was once a glorious, far-reaching prophecy.

"It is as if some splendid painted window with all its glories of design and colour, which once adorned some noble monastic building, were ruthlessly broken to pieces, and then re-collected, and studiously though clumsily put together again, with the view to make it fit into the smaller east-end window of some ancient parish church. We look at the attempted restoration, and recognize the antiquity of its parts, but find great difficulty in making out the original design. Just so is it with the Septuagint commentator; but happily in this case we have a copy of the original before us, and so can easily detect from what portion of it this and that fragment of the reconstructed prophecy has been taken, and also what patches, defacements, and alterations have been made by the ignorant though well-meaning restorer" (*ibid.*, p. 170).

Note that Boufflower is referring to the original LXX translation and not that of Theodotian centuries later. The early Christian church quickly recognized the bias that had guided the LXX translator of Daniel and chose in preference to his work a later translation of Daniel into Greek.

⁵ Wilson, Vol. II, p. 275.

⁶ Auberlen, p. 34.

⁷ Bosanquet, *Messiah the Prince, or the Introduction of the Prophecy of Daniel* (1866).

⁸ Walvoord, p. 237.

⁹ See section on hermeneutics in general introduction.

¹⁰ Philip Mauro, *The Seventy Weeks and the Great Tribulation* (Boston: Hamilton Brothers, 1923), p. 81.

¹¹ Smith and Goodspeed, *The Complete Bible: An American Translation*. Used by permission of the University of Chicago Press.

¹² Young, p. 209.

¹³ See any of the classic commentaries prior to the 20th century, e.g., Poole, Scott, Clarke, Barnes, Wordsworth.

¹⁴ Keil, pp. 348, 349.

¹⁵ Fauser on 9:24.

¹⁶ Keil says, "Vers. 25-27 present what shall be done, . . . but ver. 24 what shall be the result of all these things" (p. 374).

¹⁷ Frost, *Old Testament Apocalyptic*, p. 199.

¹² Karl Marti, *Das Buch Daniel* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1901), p. 68; Charles, *Exegetical Commentary*, p. 226f.; Bentzen, p. 41f.

¹³ See Jeffery and Porteous. The latter sees a link with the revelation of chapters 10-12 particularly, while Jeffery points also to chapter 9.

¹⁴ Barr, p. 600. See also Porteous, p. 140.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 599. See also Buhl, "Daniel," *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge*, Vol. III, p. 349; Jeffery, p. 497; Gaston, *No Stone on Another*, p. 118.

¹⁶ Auberlen comments on the relationship thus: "We must endeavour . . . to enter vividly and fully into the thoughts and feelings which form the basis of Daniel's prayer in order to understand the words of the angel. Daniel prays for the liberation of Israel and for the rebuilding of the city and sanctuary. He has in mind such promises as Jer 31—the fulfillment of the Messianic hope being inseparably connected with this restoration" (pp. 94, 95).

¹⁷ See Philip Carrington, *According to Mark* (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1960), pp. 272, 275.

¹⁸ Johannes Weiss, "Markus," *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1917), p. 193.

¹⁹ See the following for a representative sampling of what commentators have said about the relationship of Mk 13 to Dan 9:24-27:

B. Harvie Branscomb, "The Gospel of Mark," *The Moffatt New Testament Commentary* (New York: Harper and Brothers, nd), p. 237.

Carrington, *According to Mark*, pp. 270-299, 183.

Alfred Loisy, *Les Évangiles Synoptiques* (Ceffonds, 1908), Vol. II, p. 424.

Heinrich A. W. Meyer, *The Gospel of Matthew* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1884), p. 406.

Herman Olshausen, *Biblical Commentary on the New Testament* (New York: Sheldon, Blakeman and Co., 1857), Vol. II, p. 236.

A. E. J. Rawlinson, *St. Mark* (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1925), p. 187.

²⁰ Keil, p. 335.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² See *The Broadman Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1971), on the passages.

²³ Leupold, pp. 437-440.

²⁴ Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, trans. D. M. G. Stalker (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), Vol. 2, p. 314.

²⁵ Wright, p. 234.

²⁶ Leupold, p. 411.

²⁷ Keil, p. 376.

²⁸ The fact that the events at the close of the Old Testament age (climaxing in Calvary) are typical of events at the end of the age is implicit in what is today called inaugurated eschatology. As far as the New Testament is concerned, "the last days" began at the cross. That grand denouement itself was the judgment of the world, although the overt final judgment day remained future (see Acts 2:14-21). This teaching underlies the presentation of Passion Week in the Four Gospels. Gaston, for example, writes as follows on Mark:

"It was important for him to draw a parallel between the situation of Jesus and that of the church, because this allows him to promise the church something equivalent to Jesus' resurrection. He does this by taking up the term Son of Man in its original meaning as Jesus used it and showing that the pattern thus established applies to both Jesus and the church.

pattern	Jesus	church
suffering	death	persecution
vindication	resurrection	parousia

According to this pattern the death of Jesus and the persecution of the church are correlated, as are the resurrection of Jesus and the final translation of the church" (*No Stone on Another*, p. 469).

See also D. T. Niles, *As Seeing the Invisible* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1961). This writer shows that Revelation, the Bible's last prophecy, is based upon the Old Testament types and their eschatological application.

The sources named in the following footnotes of this section should be studied for an expansion of this theme.

²⁹ Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1917), pp. 677, 678.

³⁰ By "the close of the Old Testament age" we mean not only the climactic historical events recorded in the Old Testament itself but also the events in Christ's Passion Week, which numerous expositors see as foreshadowing the end of the age. See, for example, R. H. Lightfoot, *The Gospel Message of St. Mark* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), p. 31f.; A. Farrer, *A Study in St. Mark*, pp. 284-286; Walter Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Markus* (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsgesellschaft, 1928), p. 259; H. W. Bartch, "Early Christian Eschatology in the Synoptic Gospels," *New Testament Studies*, Vol. XI (1964-1965), p. 396; Gaston, *No Stone on Another*, pp. 469, 477f.

Hendrikus Berthoff says, "In all synoptic Gospels statements about the future are summarized right before the Passion story. The themes dealt with are watchfulness, oppression, decrease of love, flight, and finally spectacular natural phenomena and the coming of the Son of Man in glory. It is conspicuous that all these themes recur in the following chapters, which deal with Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection. . . . The meaning is obviously that the future will show—on a larger, and eventually worldwide scale—a repetition of what has happened in the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus" (*Well-founded Hope* [Richmond: John Knox Press, 1969], pp. 23, 24).

Compare Farrer's comment: "The substance of the Last Things and the substance of the Passion are one and the same" (*A Study in St. Mark*, p. 285).

Thus the *New Testament* takes the key events of the seventieth week of Daniel and asserts that their consummation will take place at the end of the age.

³⁷ White, *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 714, 715.

³⁸ SDA BC, Vol. 4, pp. 29, 30.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, Vol. 7, p. 729.

⁴⁰ Walvoord, p. 232.

⁴¹ Leupold, pp. 436, 437.

⁴² SDA BC, Vol. 7, p. 729. Regarding the growth parables, Burton Scott Easton has commented: "We should naturally not overstress time elements in a parable, but we have at least the duty to note that there is no parable of Jesus' that compares the development of the present Kingdom to the growth of an oak tree from an acorn; grain and mustard seed grow up in a few weeks, while heaven works overnight" (*Christ in the Gospels* [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1930], p. 163).

And a similar parable, accompanied by its interpretation, is found in the Epistle of Clement: "O you fools, consider a plant, a grapevine for example. First it sheds the old leaves, then the young shoots sprout, then leaves, then flowers, then the green grapes, finally the ripe grapes appear. You see how quickly the fruit is ripe. Even so quickly and suddenly will God's final judgment come, as the Scripture testifies: He will come quickly and will not tarry, suddenly the Lord will come to His temple, the Holy One for whom you wait" (1 Clem. 23:4, 5)" (cited by Rudolf Bultmann, *Jesus and The Word* [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934], p. 34).

Beasley-Murray quotes also the following from Haupt approvingly: "Everything said about the parousia and the events that precede it continually moves in the second person plural, hence the presupposition is that those addressed would live to see it; further, not in one single place is the possibility reckoned with that they all would die beforehand" (*Jesus and the Future*, p. 184).

Lloyd Gaston suggests a valid argument for the fourth school, which frequently passes unnoticed. He says, "Seeing the Son of Man" is a conception very closely allied to the death of martyrs. In context, however, Mk 9:1 speaks to the situation not of the martyrs themselves but of those facing martyrdom, and it holds out for them the promise of consolation. Mk 13:30 is similar. If 'this generation' is going to undergo all the tribulation which Mark 13 entails, and it is to be recalled that this chapter was formulated for people who had already experienced tribulation, then fairness demands that this generation also experience the promised vindication. If the promise of the parousia is to have any relevance at all for those addressed, then it must be promised for their lifetime" (*No Stone on Another*, p. 453).

R. A. Knox speaks similarly: "By a rather free interpretation of the language used, you can just maintain that our Lord spoke

only about the destruction of Jerusalem, and tacitly refused information about the Second Coming. By supposing that the Evangelists, here as elsewhere, include one or two sayings which really belonged to a different context, you can save the accuracy of the prediction, but at the same time you rob it of all certainty. Is it possible to preserve the unity of the passage, and at the same time to interpret its phrases in their natural sense? Only on the supposition that this was a conditional prophecy (cf. Jonas 3:4 and 10), and that the condition of it . . . remained and still remains unfulfilled (cf. Romans 11:26, and notes on II Thess. 2:6). In this way we can see the picture as a continuous whole, and at the same time understand why the fulfilment of it has been only partial" (*A New Testament Commentary for English Readers* [London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne Ltd., 1953], Vol. 1, p. 56).

Another writer of an earlier day has written thoughtfully upon this topic, and it is not necessary to agree throughout with his theology in order to see a viewpoint which was possibly akin to that of New Testament believers and Christ Himself. Fairbairn sets forth the basic principles of his case somewhat similarly to Olshausen and then adds, "Thus, to refer to the predictions . . . —those respecting the second advent of the Lord—there can be no doubt, that (however definitely fixed in the counsels of Heaven) certain things among men are represented as tending, on the one side to hinder, on the other to forward its approach. Our Lord, in one of his parables (Luke xviii. 1-8, speaks as if it hung on the steadfast faith and persevering prayer of his elect people. St Peter uses still stronger language; he exhorts believers to a hopeful, godly, and consistent life, that they might hasten on the day of the Lord's coming, (for such is the plain import of his words . . . 2 Pet iii. 12). And St Paul not only speaks of a grand development of apostasy necessarily preceding the arrival of that day, but of certain things, which he does not further characterize, hindering this development, and by implication retarding the personal appearance of the Lord, which in the chain of providences was to be subsequent to the other" (*Prophecy*, pp. 64, 65).

Fairbairn then spells out his belief for the reason of the delay of the Parousia: "For the church being then in the full spring-tide of its life and blessing, burning with holy zeal for the proper fulfilment of its mission, it might well seem, as if that mission were hastening to its accomplishment, and all things were becoming ready for the final harvest of the world. Yet, it must have been impossible for any one to read with care some of the parables of our Lord, or even what was written by St Paul of the great apostasy . . . without coming to the conviction, that there was still an implied alternative; namely, that if the church of Christ should degenerate in her course, if she should begin to slumber in the work given her to do, still more, if she should become adulterated by the carnal spirit, and the corrupt practices of the world, then the shadows of the evening should need to be lengthened out, and . . . the Lord should have to protract the day of his appearing" (*ibid.*, p. 65). For further discussion as to which prophecies are conditional and which are not, see Fairbairn's *Prophecy*.

In a prophecy (8:14) sealed until the "time of the end," a prophecy concealing years under the guise of days, God had foretold what was to be. But through Gabriel (9:24-27), and later Christ, He told of what might have been.

⁴³ Leupold, p. 405.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 409.

⁴⁵ Kevan, *Revelation and the Bible*, pp. 295, 296.

⁴⁶ Price, p. 226.

⁴⁷ Walvoord, p. 220.

⁴⁸ Allis, *Prophecy and the Church*, p. 119.

⁴⁹ For a recent study of the current interpretations of the seventy weeks of 9:24-27, see Gerhard F. Hasel, "The Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9:24-27," (Washington: Biblical Research Institute, 1976), first issued as a supplement in *The Ministry*, May, 1976.

Commentary on Daniel 9

1 In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, by birth a Mede, who became king over the realm of the Chaldeans— ²in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, perceived in the books the number of years which, according to the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.

3 Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and supplications with fasting and sackcloth and ashes.

This is probably the same year that Daniel was thrown into the den of lions. Great trial and great blessing often go together, with one preparing us for the other. Clouds presage the blessings of rain, and even depression can be a John the Baptist in rough clothing. On the other hand, a full cup is harder to carry than one only partly filled, and "the abundance of revelations" can precede "a thorn in the flesh" or storms of outward trial.

Though he is a prophet, it is not beneath Daniel to study the writings of other inspired men. Every good teacher is a learner as well, and Daniel does not expect to receive miraculously what can be gotten naturally. Even our Lord had to study the Scriptures just as we do, and His mastery of them was not the result of miracle.

It is now only a matter of months before the term of seventy years predicted for the exile should

terminate. Daniel does not take for granted the expected deliverance but beseeches God to fulfill His promise. The promises were never intended to displace prayer. Instead, they are meant to stimulate our calling upon God. Too often security fosters negligence, and negligence invites Providence to send reminders of our weakness and need. In the present instance we have an excellent illustration of the need for human cooperation with divine grace. Scripture clearly teaches that even the coming of Christ may be hastened by men's repentance and service but delayed by their apathy (see Acts 3:19-21; 2 Pe 3:12). In all spiritual issues, without Him we cannot, but without us He will not.

Few prayers of Holy Writ take more than two minutes to repeat. There must be good reason for God's chronicling this one in detail. The

connection between this account and the prophecy that succeeds it is verbally close. Indeed, most of

the key words of this prayer are repeated in Gabriel's message.

4I prayed to the Lord my God and made confession, saying, "O Lord, the great and terrible God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, **5**we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from thy commandments and ordinances; **6**we have not listened to thy servants the prophets, who spoke in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. **7**To thee, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us confusion of face, as at this day, to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel, those that are near and those that are far away, in all the lands to which thou hast driven them, because of the treachery which they have committed against thee. **8**To us, O Lord, belongs confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee. **9**To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness; because we have rebelled against him, **10**and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God by following his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. **11**All Israel has transgressed thy law and turned aside, refusing to obey thy voice. And the curse and oath which are written in the law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out upon us, because we have sinned against him. **12**He has confirmed his words, which he spoke against us and against our rulers who ruled us, by bringing upon us a great calamity; for under the whole heaven there has not been done the like of what has been done against Jerusalem. **13**As it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come upon us, yet we have not entreated the favor of the Lord our God, turning from our iniquities and giving heed to thy truth. **14**Therefore the Lord has kept ready the calamity and has brought it upon us; for the Lord our God is righteous in all the works which he has done, and we have not obeyed his voice. **15**And now, O Lord our God, who didst bring thy people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and hast made thee a name, as at this day, we have sinned, we have done wickedly. **16**O Lord, according to all thy righteous acts, let thy anger and thy wrath turn away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy hill; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people have become a byword among all who are round about us. **17**Now therefore, O our God, hearken to

the prayer of thy servant and to his supplications, and for thy own sake, O Lord, cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary, which is desolate. ¹⁸O my God, incline thy ear and hear; open thy eyes and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name; for we do not present our supplications before thee on the ground of our righteousness, but on the ground of thy great mercy. ¹⁹O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, give heed and act; delay not, for thy own sake, O my God, because thy city and thy people are called by thy name."

No wonder the prophet is called a man of "excellent spirit." To read his prayer is to be humbled with the thought of one's own lack of humility and fervency. Particularly striking is the manner in which Daniel takes the guilt of his countrymen upon himself. At the close of his prayer Gabriel strengthens him, calls him the beloved of Heaven, and proceeds to show that Heaven intends to grant much more than the prophet has requested. Fausset remarks on the relation between the two parts of this chapter thus:

Daniel takes his countrymen's place of confession of sin, identifying himself with them, and, as their *representative* and intercessory priest, "accepts the punishment of their iniquity." Thus he typifies Messiah, the Sin-bearer and great Intercessor. The prophet's own life and experience forms the fit starting-point of the prophecy concerning the sin-atonement.¹

Calvin devotes approximately fifty pages of commentary to this prayer, in strong contrast to the short shrift that most modern commentators (including the present writer) give to it. Probably the reason is indicated in the following remarks from the Reformer.

Although we are easily induced to confess ourselves guilty before God, yet scarcely one in a hundred is affected with serious remorse; and those who excel others, and purely and reverently fear God, are still very dull and cold in recounting their sins. First of all, they acknowledge scarcely one in a hundred; next, of those which do come into their minds, they do not fully estimate their tremendous guilt, but rather extenuate their magnitude; and, although they perceive themselves worthy of a

hundred deaths, yet they are not touched with their bitterness, and fear to humble themselves as they ought, nay, they are scarcely displeased with themselves, and do not loathe their own iniquities. . . . If we examine carefully the confessions of men in general, we shall always find some latent hypocrisy, and that there are very few who prostrate themselves before God as they ought.²

And in a later place he adds:

First, all who approach God ought to cast themselves down before him, and to acknowledge themselves deserving of a thousand deaths; next, to enable them to emerge from the abyss of despair, and to raise themselves to the hope of pardon, they should call upon God without fear or doubt, and with firm and stable confidence.³

The Reformers rightly thought of the gospel as revolving around two great truths—the depravity of man and the goodness of God. In our marshmallow generation the gospel too often has become candy-coated, and half of it—the first half—is neglected. The very prayer before us indicates that only when the law, the requirements of God, and the admonitions of the prophets are elevated before men will they feel their need of the healing balm that only Heaven can give (see vs. 5, 10, 11).

As one reads and rereads Daniel's prayer, a pattern emerges. The prophet shifts from the good character of God to the evil conduct of man. The majesty and might of our Maker are held up to view, and then the sinfulness and weakness of man the creature. Not only the divine righteousness but the divine mercy is emphasized as the only remedy for the frailty and evil of men. How well this compares with what has been called the ACTS of

prayer: A—adoration, C—confession, T—thanksgiving, S—supplication.

The prayer of Daniel arises out of the study of and confidence in the revealed Word of God. The facts of experience are measured by the facts of revelation, not vice versa. He who prays without an eye to God's character, promises, and mighty deeds gains no strength.

Not only does this prayer contain all the key words that shortly will be used by Gabriel in his message, but it also is connected in theme with the vision of the previous chapter that had culminated in the despite being done to the sanctuary by the little horn and the promise from Heaven of the sanctuary's ultimate vindication and restoration. Verse 17 refers to "thy sanctuary, which is desolate," and verse 18, "our desolations."

In verse 19 the prophet pleads, "O Lord, hear;

O Lord, forgive; O Lord, give heed and act; delay not, for thy own sake, O my God." It is evident that Daniel fears lest the restoration of the sanctuary is to be delayed for yet another 2300 days, although the period of the exile should be nearly over. He had seen in the vision the terrible fact that the sanctuary, after its restoration, was again to be desolated, but he also is aware that at the very time of his prayer the sanctuary was already in that state. He wonders how the promise of 8:14 applies, and whether it is solely for the future, or if it fits the present desolate temple of his people. Fortunately, though he was a puzzled man, he was also a prayerful man, and thus his bewilderment was soon to be lessened. Would that all his readers might solve their perplexities in the same manner.

20 While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the holy hill of my God; ²¹while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the first, came to me in swift flight at the time of the evening sacrifice. ²²He came and he said to me, "O Daniel, I have now come out to give you wisdom and understanding. ²³At the beginning of your supplications a word went forth, and I have come to tell it to you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the word and understand the vision."

In verse 21 the prophet reminds us that the heavenly messenger who now comes is the one he had seen in the previous vision, who had strengthened him at a time of psychosomatic weariness. (See discussion of the phrase "in swift flight" on page 207.)

The expression "a word went forth" has often been interpreted as the demand of Heaven that Gabriel visit Daniel. Both Jeffery and Boutflower make this application. But another possibility that others favor is that the "word" is the divine announcement of Heaven's purposes as set forth in the following verses. This would not mean that now for the first time such purposes had been

devised but only that their announcement was now made.⁴

The time (the hour of the evening sacrifice) of this revelation and the strengthening word to Daniel that he is "greatly beloved" remind us of Another who agonized in prayer centuries later. He too was "greatly beloved" and like Daniel had taken the guilt of His people upon Himself (cf. with 9:20-23 the account of the angel visitant in Gethsemane—Lk 22:41-44). It is also interesting to note that at the very hour of the day that Daniel received his revelation, this later Prince and Prophet of the tribe of Judah fulfilled the grand promises now conveyed by Gabriel.

24 "Seventy weeks of years are decreed concerning your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place."

This passage concisely summarizes the results of Christ's ministry in life, death, and resurrection. It comprehends the good things God has promised to man and shows by what it continues to say that God's blessings for mortals depend upon the work of the Messiah.

"Seventy weeks of years are decreed." Because this is part of the literal explanation of 8:1-14, we need not invoke the year-day principle, although it is true that the "years" are implied rather than stated in the Hebrew. Such matters as rebuilding Jerusalem could never be fulfilled in weeks of days. Furthermore, Daniel had been studying concerning seventy years, and he is now told that that period is to be multiplied seven times as a further period of probation for Israel. Weeks of years were well known to the Jews and to other ancient nations.

"Decreed"—this is not the same word as is so translated in the final verse of this chapter. The Hebrew term here is unique, occurring but once in Scripture. All lexicographers declare that it literally means "cut off." Newell's commentary declares:

The Hebrew word used here . . . has the literal connotation of "cutting off" in the sense of severing from a larger portion. Thus the seventy weeks are "a fixed and limited period, of definite duration, forming part of a longer period, the duration of which is not fixed, or at least, not declared" (G. H. Lang). The longer period implied here in chapter 9 as that from which the seventy weeks are "severed off" . . . is the whole period of Gentile dominion which is the scope of Nebuchadnezzar's vision, chapter 2; of Daniel's vision in chapter 7; and also of his visions in chapter 8, and chapters 11:2-12:12.³

Though Newell believes the seventy weeks of years to be cut off from the longer period of Gentile dominion pictured in chapter 8, he particularly repudiates the views of Seventh-day Adventists in this regard. But it is interesting to

note that H. G. Guinness saw 1844 as one of the terminal dates for the Times of the Gentiles.⁶ This was only to follow in the steps of a host of commentators during the previous hundred years or so. If Gabriel is fulfilling the commission of 8:16 to explain 8:1-14 to Daniel, and if it is the *what* and *when* of verse 14 that is still outstanding and requiring explanation, it seems quite evident that this first statement from Gabriel asserts the seventy weeks of years to be "cut off" from the 2300 symbolic days or actual years.

The next statement, recorded in verse 25, will proceed to give the starting point for both the shorter and the longer periods. Judging from 10:1 and 12:8, the prophet came to understand the gist of 8:1-14 but never fully all the chronological implications. Inasmuch as certain of these were conditional upon the response of his people, this situation is as it should be. Peter tells us that the revelation is particularly for Christians, especially those awaiting "the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Pe 1:10-13).

We should note that the six items of promise fall into two sets of three. The first three speak of a clearing of the ground for the fulfillment of the second three. Furthermore, the first item of the second set is the counterpart of the first of the first set, and the case is likewise with the succeeding members of each set. The middle statement in each group even employs the identical verb.

Four key words in 9:24 are found together in only one other place in the Scriptures—the description of the Day of Atonement in Lev 16. These are the three terms for "sin" and the word *atone* (*kaphar* used sixteen times). Both passages, 9:24 and Lev 16, refer to a special work in connection with the most holy place of the sanctuary. It is significant that 9:24, an explanation of 8:14, uses the key terms of the Day of Atonement and refers to the most holy place, where that work centered. Here is a strong basis

for seeing in 8:14 a reference to the eschatological atonement as well as the soteriological atonement of Calvary.

Thus we see that in this verse, as in the whole passage of 9:24-27, there is an application eschatologically to the kingdom consummated as well as to the kingdom inaugurated by the earthly ministry of Christ. This is in harmony with the well-known contention of New Testament scholars that the pattern of the Biblical revelation is one of promise, fulfillment, and consummation. Calvary fulfilled the Old Testament promises of redemption by its inaugurated eschatology, but the judgment and Second Advent will consummate the saving work of Christ by its complete eradication of evil and its establishment of "everlasting righteousness."

The first of the three terms used for sin in 9:24 is a comprehensive statement regarding the forgiving grace of God made on the occasion of the renewing of the violated covenant. The second is taken from the account of that day which above all others symbolized the greatness of God's forgiveness—the Day of Atonement. The first word, *transgression* (*pesha'*), implies high-handed sin, willful transgression of known law. The second, *sin* (*chatta'ah*), literally means "to miss the mark" and applies to deviations from rectitude not as marked as the first group. The third, *iniquity* (*'awon*), means "offense" or "sin," also "guilt" and even "punishment"; here it is used in the sense of "guilt," which requires atonement.⁷ Thus the three terms comprehensively cover all wickedness, and the passage could be read—"to shut up transgression, to seal up sin, and to cover up iniquity"—as though sin were a prisoner to be incarcerated in a tomb, then to be sealed up, and finally buried by an avalanche. No more complete description of the abolition of all evil could possibly be made. Another view is suggested by Keil:

The three expressions, it is true, all treat alike of the setting aside of sin, but in different ways. The first presents the general thought, that the falling away shall be shut up, the progress and the spreading of the sin shall be prevented. The other two expressions define more closely how the source

whence arises the apostasy shall be shut up, the going forth and the continued operation of the sin prevented. This happens in one way with unbelievers, and in a different way with believers. The sins of unbelievers are sealed, are guarded securely under a seal, so that they may no more spread about and increase, not any longer be active and operative; but the sins of believers are forgiven through a reconciliation.⁸

The verb *kaphar* ("atone") used in the last clause is a technical term used about fifty times in Leviticus for the making of an atoning sacrifice. It is also connected with the work of the High Priest on the great Day of Atonement when the sins of the penitent of the nation were "removed" from the sanctuary in one day. The term is a legal one, as is the case with *sedeq* ("righteousness"), which succeeds it. The succession of ideas with the threefold description of sin familiar to that day when the sanctuary was cleansed, linked with the word for "reconciliation" and "atonement" and climaxed with "righteousness," could not but remind every Jew of that occasion at the close of each year when the judgment of all professed believers was typically enacted. This fact vitally connects the present verse with the promise of 8:14 that the sanctuary would be justified. The root term (*šadaq*), translated variously as "cleansed," "vindicated," "restored to its rightful estate," "justified," is the same as that found in the present verse (9:24) for the positive result of the removal of all evil—everlasting righteousness.

This remarkable passage thus describes the great antitypical atonement both in its provision on Calvary and its application in the final judgment. Every sinner needs an atonement for his sins, either by his death or an equivalent sacrifice, and the provision of a perfect righteousness that can survive the investigation of the Eternal Judge. Christ provides both by His death, which cancels sin, and by which His own perfect character, imputed to the believer, ever issues in righteousness of life. Justification is "an anticipated last judgment"; thus the absolution granted to the sinner who receives Christ must one day be eternally ratified when he stands before the Judge of all the earth. Calvary, without its consummation in "the last things" of the judgment, Second

Advent, and a cleansed universe, would avail little.

In summary, these introductory clauses of 9:24 tell of the divine provision of the cross for sin's complete eradication, and they point also to the consummation at the end of time when the judgment of God will render everlasting and complete all the blessings that Calvary secured.

"To bring in everlasting righteousness" is not only reminiscent of 2:44 and 7:27, both of which use the same term, but points also to that perfect righteousness imputed to every believer in Christ (see Rom 5:15-19; 1 Cor 1:31; 2 Cor 5:21). "This fourth expression forms the positive supplement of the first: in the place of the absolutely removed transgression is the perfected righteousness."⁹

"To seal both vision and prophet" means both to ratify and fulfill prophetic vision. In a special sense the events of the seventy weeks guarantee the fulfillment of the particular promise of the previous vision—"then the sanctuary shall be restored" (8:14). The accomplishment in history of the events of the 490 years ratify, or make certain, the accomplishment of what has been promised for the period following the 2300 years. But the clause points to even more. The Crucifixion was the fulfillment of the chief prophecies of the Old Testament such as Is 53, Ps 22, the present passage, and a host of others. Again, the end of this present age will see the consummation of all that the prophets of both Testaments have foretold.

The figure of sealing is regarded by many interpreters in the sense of confirming, and that by filling up, with reference to the custom of impressing a seal on a writing for the confirmation of its contents; and in illustration these references are given: 1 Kings xxi. 8, and Jer xxxii. 10, 11, 44.¹⁰

Keil continues by offering another view:

Prophecies and prophets are sealed, when by the full realization of all prophecies prophecy ceases, no prophets any more appear. . . . "When the sins are sealed, the prophecy is also sealed, for prophecy is needed in the war against sin; when sin is thus so placed that it can no longer operate, then prophecy also may come to a state of rest; when sin comes to an end in its place, prophecy can come to an end also by

fulfilment, there being no place for it after the setting aside of sin. And when the apostasy is shut up, so that it can no more spread about, then righteousness will be brought, that it may possess the earth, now freed from sin, shut up in its own place" (Kliefoth).¹¹

"And to anoint a most holy place." The RSV has rightly used "place." The Hebrew expression employed applies to things rather than persons. At Christ's ascension as our High Priest the heavenly sanctuary had its anointing simultaneously with the anointing of the earthly sanctuary—the church—on the day of Pentecost (see Acts 2:33; Heb 6:20; cf. Ex 40:9, 10). The prophecy is to have another fulfillment at the consummation of all things.

Says Leupold:

But the thing that was typified by that which was by pre-eminence designated as "the most holy," viz., the most holy part of the sanctuary, that, we say, might well be under consideration. But the most holy with the ark of the covenant typified the throne of God and so God's dwelling among His people. That which was prefigured by the symbol and realized in a measure in the old covenant, that is here referred to as about to come to a perfect realization. God will come near to them and dwell in their midst in truth and verity, being a sun for them (Rev 21:23) and a wall of defense round about them (Zech 2:5).

Rev 21:3 correctly describes what we mean: "Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall dwell with them"—a truth that is realized to perfection only in the consummation of all things. To expect too little from prophecy means to find but little in it. The final goal of God in His dealings with men is here realized, the thing that also marks the conclusion of the book of Revelation. Since the Temple must disappear (Rev 21:22), "the Most Holy One" is the Christ among His own.¹²

Zöckler's comment is also of interest:

The prospect of an "anointing of the most Holy," which is presented at the close, . . . is evidently a solemn act of worship, which is substantially equivalent to the restoration of the theocratic worship as a whole. It is the anointing . . . of the Messianic community of the redeemed, the pure sanctuary, which shall no more be profaned, . . . according to chapter viii. 14 (cf. vii. 25).¹³

Thus this commentator joins the number of those who parallel 7:25-27 (regarding the judgment) with 8:14 and 9:24.

And both this expression "to anoint a most holy place" and "to atone for iniquity" have strong relationship with 8:14. The service which initiated the use of the sanctuary, the original anointing (cf. Ex 40:9, 10), and the service which sealed the destiny of the congregation at the close of each year's typical service (the Day of Atonement, Lev 16) both witnessed access to the holy of holies, and both pointed to a divinely blessed new beginning. Heb 9 also links these two services, showing that Calvary fulfills them but indicating also that it is Christ's return "without sin unto salvation" (Heb 9:28, KJV) that consummates them.

This magnificent verse 24 of Dan 9 comprehends the mighty acts of God for His people through the work of the Messiah, both in sacrificial provision and in priestly and kingly

application. These six items were all legally accomplished by AD 34 at the end of the 490 years. They will be consummated "in the new world" (Mt 19:28). Thus will the sanctuary be vindicated. The angel has now, in essence, fulfilled the commission recorded in 8:16. The "what" and "when" of 8:14 have now been made clear. The "what" is the finishing of sin through the Messiah's atonement, provided and applied. The "when" begins 2300 symbolic days, and less than 490 years, after the decree of 9:25 for the preparatory stage.

Notice that the expressions "your people" and "your holy city" apply literally to Daniel's people of old, but the statements (as with 11:45 and 12:1) transcend this meaning and embrace spiritual Israel as well. Leupold rightly asserts:

As so often in prophecy, terms like God's "people" and God's "holy city" broaden out to the point where they assume a breadth of meaning like that found in the New Testament (cf. Gal. 6:16).¹⁴

25 "Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built up again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time."

Notice the following translations of verse 25:

Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times (KJV).

Know therefore and discern, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the anointed one, the prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: it shall be built again, with street and moat, even in troublous times (RV; see also NEB).

Be assured of this, and mark it well; a period of seven weeks must go by, and another period of sixty-two weeks, between the order to rebuild Jerusalem and the coming of the Christ to be your leader. Street and wall will be built again, though in a time of distress (Knox).¹⁵

Learn, therefore, and understand:

"From the going forth of the word to restore and rebuild Jerusalem,

Till there comes a prince, an anointed one, there shall be seven weeks;

Then for sixty-two weeks it shall stay rebuilt, with its squares and streets" (Goodspeed).¹⁶

Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem until [the coming of] the anointed one, a prince, shall be seven weeks [of years], and sixty-two weeks [of years]; it shall be built again with city square and moat, but in troublous times (Amplified Bible).¹⁷

We have here given several renderings of this verse, as the punctuation adopted is vital for the interpretation of the passage. However, the reverse is also true. It is the interpretation of the

verse that has determined the punctuation, as all translators admit. Those who believe that the book was written in the second century BC, and that this prophecy points solely to the times of Antiochus, place a period after "seven weeks" on the assumption that the anointed one spoken of in the verse is not Christ, but someone else who lived in the sixth century BC. Also, those who believe that the time periods here are symbolic employ the same punctuation, though believing that the anointed one is indeed Jesus.

What are the facts? First, it must be remembered that the original had no punctuation at all. Second, only centuries after Christ did the Jewish Masoretes suggest a punctuation mark at this point. They inserted what is known as an Ethnarch, a symbol for pause and emphasis. It was another way of saying that the division of the sixty-nine weeks into two periods, one of seven weeks and the other of sixty-two, was of considerable importance.

There is no valid reason for choosing to use a period here as the equivalent of the Ethnarch. Notice other illustrations of the use of the same punctuation:

Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel [Ethnarch] making petition and supplication (6:11).

I, Daniel, perceived in the books [Ethnarch] the number of years (9:2).

Then this Daniel became distinguished above all the other presidents and satraps [Ethnarch], because an excellent spirit was in him (6:3).

Another criticism must be made of the RSV translation, which in this verse follows many of its predecessors without cause. There should be no article before "word."¹⁸ As Boutflower says:

To render it "the word" would be to relegate its utterance to past time, thereby leading the reader to suppose that the "word" intended was the promise made to Jeremiah referred to in v. 2; whereas, as a matter of fact, the time . . . is left quite undefined.¹⁹

Critical scholars of rationalist persuasion usually apply this "word" to such passages as Jer 30:18; 31:38-40 as Boutflower has indicated. Thereby they stand the prophecy on its head by

turning a promise into a command and by making the first period of restoration one of desolation, for if we date from the days of Jeremiah, we date from the beginning of the seventy years of desolation.

The difficulty of fixing upon the precise starting point for this prophecy is not unexpected. All prophecy is so written that "none of the wicked shall understand; but those who are wise shall understand" (12:10). And even the wise understand only as much as it is good for them to know at their stage in the history of the church. Christ's words to His disciples are appropriate for all who study prophecy. He declared on that last night of His ministry: "I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now" (Jn 16:12). And His words that followed indicated that the unveiling work of the Spirit would be a gradual one. Most prophecies are characterized by a "concealed definiteness" and become clear at the time most appropriate for the church.

In the present instance we find that history offers us four edicts concerned with the restoration of Israel. In 538/537, 519(?), 457, and 444 BC, decrees were issued by Cyrus, Darius Hystaspes, and Artaxerxes (two decrees) respectively. Therefore we must consider closely the requirements of the prophecy. "From the going forth of the word to restore and build Jerusalem" requires more than the first two edicts gave. The proclamations of Cyrus and Darius gave priority to the rebuilding of the temple rather than to the restoration of the civil state. Only the first decree of Artaxerxes in 457 BC gave the Jews full autonomy and provided for the building of the walls and gates of Jerusalem. The mandate given to Nehemiah in 444 BC had to do with the completion of the work provided for in the decree by Artaxerxes years earlier.

The remarks of Fausset, largely based on Auberlen, are worthy of consideration.

The seventy weeks date thirteen years before the rebuilding of Jerusalem; for then the re-establishment of the theocracy began, viz., at the return of Ezra to Jerusalem, 457 BC. So Jeremiah's seventy years of the captivity begin 606 BC, eighteen years before the destruction of Jerusalem, for then Judah ceased to exist as an independent theocracy, having fallen under the sway of Babylon. Two periods are

marked in Ezra: (1) The return from the captivity under Jeshua and Zerubbabel, and rebuilding of the temple, which was the first anxiety of the theocratic nation. (2) The return of Ezra (who was regarded by the Jews as a second Moses) from Persia to Jerusalem, the restoration of the city, the nationality, and the law. Artaxerxes, in the seventh year of his reign, gave him the commission which virtually includes permission to rebuild the city. . . . [This decree was] afterwards confirmed to and carried out by Nehemiah in the twentieth year (Ezra ix. 9; vii. 11, &c); v. 25, "from the going forth of the commandment to build Jerusalem," proves that the second of the two periods is referred to.

The words in v. 24 are not, "determined upon the holy city," but "upon thy people and thy holy city"; thus the restoration of the religious national polity and the law (the inner work, fulfilled by Ezra the priest), and the rebuilding of the houses and walls (the outer work of Nehemiah, the governor) are both included in v. 25, "to restore and to build Jerusalem." "Jerusalem" represents both the city, the body, and the congregation, the soul of the state. Cf. Ps. xlvii; xlviii; lxxxvii.

The starting-point of the seventy weeks dated from eighty-one years after Daniel received the prophecy: the object being not to fix for him definitely the time, but for the Church: the prophecy taught him that the Messianic redemption, which he thought near, was separated from him by at least a half millennium.

Expectation was sufficiently kept alive by the general conception of the time; not only the Jews, but many Gentiles, looked for some great Lord of the earth to spring from Judea at that very time (Tacitus, *Histories*, v. 13; Suetonius, *Vespasian*, iv).²⁰

Taylor G. Bunch looks upon the decree of 9:25 as being that of Cyrus, but suggests that its "going forth" was its confirmation and fulfillment in 457 B.C. He points out that Ezra 6:14 presents the successive commandments of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes as being only parts of the one decree.

The decree would mark the end of one period of desolation and reach to the beginning of another from which there would be no recovery or restoration. The nation and throne of Israel would "be no more till He come whose right it is," and to King Jesus would be given the everlasting throne and dominion of this rebel world. See Eze. 21:25-27. This will meet its complete fulfillment at the second advent of Christ.

Dan. 2:44; 7:13, 14, 29; Matt. 25:31-34. The blessings denied to the nation and people of temporal Israel because of their unbelief and rebellion would be given to spiritual Israel in the final restoration.

By the going forth of whose commandment would the seventy weeks begin? Since the Lord was guiding in the affairs of nations for the fulfillment of His own purpose, doubtless in a primary sense the mentioned commandment or decree was His. But the Lord works through human agencies. Who was the servant or agent through whom this decree was given that would end the period of Israel's captivity and begin the period of their last opportunity? "The commandment" indicates that the Lord recognizes but one decree regarding the restoration of the Jews to their homeland and the rebuilding of their city and temple. It is not a decree or one of the decrees, but the decree. It is the kingly decree inspired by the Lord to fulfill His word through Jeremiah concerning a prophetic time period that was about to end, and another that was about to begin.

This decree to restore and build Jerusalem was so important that it was foretold by divine revelation 161 years before it was issued and the king who should proclaim it named more than 100 years before he was born. Isa. 44:26-28; 45:1-5, 13. Here Cyrus is declared to be God's "messenger" and "shepherd" who would perform His pleasure in the restoration of Jerusalem.

The decree here described would include the freeing of the Jewish captives and the permission to return to their own land to rebuild Jerusalem and "the cities of Judah," and the restoration of the temple and its services.

That this decree is all-inclusive so that it embraces the complete restoration of all that was destroyed and made desolate by the Babylonians is evident from this prophecy together with the record of the decree after it was proclaimed. See 2 Chron. 36:22, 23; Ezra 1:1-4. The temple was the chief part of the city of Jerusalem and its restoration was the most important part of the rebuilding program. It was God who "stirred up the spirit of Cyrus" to issue this decree for Him. . . .

Three kings issued decrees regarding the restoration of Jerusalem and the temple and the worship and government of the Jews. The first was issued by Cyrus in 536 B.C.; the second by Darius Hystaspes in 519(?) B.C.; the third by Artaxerxes Longimanus in 457 B.C. In fact, Artaxerxes issued another decree to Nehemiah in 444 B.C. This however was more of the granting of authority to carry into execution his former decree. It was only an

enlargement of the decree issued by him in 457 and by Cyrus in 536. But God seems to recognize but one decree which He predicted more than 150 years before it was issued and which was proclaimed under the inspiration of His Spirit. Therefore, all subsequent decrees must be considered as only enlargements of the one decree and the giving of authority to carry out its provisions. The laws of the Medes and Persians were permanent and unchangeable and it was never necessary for future kings to do more than to issue decrees for the purpose of enforcing former decrees or laws.

That the three decrees of the three kings were really one, and that they represented the commandment or decree of God is evident from Ezra 6:14 which declares that the work of rebuilding was finished "according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes, king of Persia." Notice that it says "commandment" and not "commandments." It was God's commandment or decree issued through His "messenger" and "shepherd" Cyrus and confirmed and executed by Darius and Artaxerxes. Therefore it could not be said that the decree was completed until it was enforced by the two subsequent decrees. This is indicated by the statement in our text: "And from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem." A decree or law does not always go forth into operation and execution at the time it is issued. The decree was first issued by Cyrus in 536 B. C. but it did not go forth in its complete fulfillment till 457 B. C.²¹

Consult Froom's *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* for comments from literally scores of exegetes who over the centuries have taken the same starting point for the 490 years, and *The Chronology of Ezra 7* by Horn and Wood for the reasons behind selecting 457 BC instead of 458 BC.²²

The first seven weeks of years thus cover the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, the period of rebuilding during the troublous years between 457 BC and 408 BC. Note the typical relation between this first period of the seventy weeks and the last. The former points to the preparatory salvation after the captivity, and the latter to the full Messianic salvation. One points to the establishment of the literal temple, the other to the spiritual temple of the church (see Mt 16:18). Between the two significant eras lie the sixty-two weeks. The

number itself lacks the symbolic impress of the other divisions and points to a period of darkness with little of miraculous revelation. Auberlen has likened the respective sections to the evening red of sunset, the long dark night, and the glory of the morning.²³ During that night of 434 years came the dreadful afflictions associated with Antiochus Epiphanes. The earth was at its darkest prior to the rising of the Sun of righteousness with healing in His beams (see Mal 4:2).

"An anointed one, a prince." Both these names are titles and therefore appear in the Hebrew without the definite article, though the English translation may legitimately use it before each of the two words. Again we quote from Boufflower:

The fact that the title is here associated with the restored Jerusalem—indirectly indicated as the place where "Messiah" would be "cut off"—and that in Daniel's prayer Jerusalem is described as "thy holy mountain," are alike suggestive that it is taken from Ps. ii. 2, "The kings of the earth set themselves . . . against his anointed," seeing that further on in that Psalm, viz. in v. 6, Jehovah gives to Zion that same name, "my holy hill." . . . The second Psalm . . . was referred to the Messiah by the ancient Jewish commentators. . . . Further, the view given in it of Messiah's kingdom is in striking harmony with such passages as Dan. ii. 35, 44, and vii. 13, 14. . . . The Psalm is attributed to the age of David, Solomon, or of Ahaz, . . . an interval . . . enough to allow of a descriptive becoming a title. In the Book of Zechariah, iii. 8, we have another title of the expected King. . . . The term *Tsemach*, "Branch," . . . is here used as a proper name, and is therefore without the definite article. . . . If *tsemach* from being a descriptive could become a title within less than a century, why not *mashiach* in nearly double that time?²⁴

The intent of the phrase is to bespeak one who is both anointed and also a princely leader of God's people. In Old Testament times only kings and priests were regularly anointed, and therefore we are required to think of one who is not only a priest (anointed one) but a king (or prince) as well. Only one person in all history fits the requirements, and that Person is Jesus of Nazareth (see Zech 6:13; Ps 110:4; Jn 4:25; Acts 10:38).²⁵ There is truly "no

other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

All other theories regarding the one specified in this passage ignore the relationship between this verse and the preceding. Only the Messiah could implement all that had been promised in verse 24.

Thus forty-nine years (seven weeks) and a further 434 years (sixty-two weeks) were to extend to the manifestation of the Messiah. Priests were anointed at the age of thirty, and in AD 27 Jesus

reached that age and was anointed by the Holy Spirit and publicly proclaimed as the Messiah.²⁶ The New Testament is more specific in dating this event (see Lk 3) than the whole Bible is in regard to any other occasion. We should note that the prophecy does not point to the birth of Jesus but to the beginning of His ministry. This provides perfectly for the fulfillment of the events of the seventieth week's embracing both Christ's preaching to Israel and that of His disciples.

26⁴⁴ "And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off, and shall have nothing; and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war; desolations are decreed."

Now we are told of the judicial death of the Messiah and the results, both as far as He was concerned and as far as the people responsible for His rejection were concerned. Thomson says on this passage:

The Messiah: the word has no article, and, therefore, it is argued, it ought to be rendered "an anointed one;" but the use of the article is not so rigid. It is omitted in poetic and semi-poetic passages: e.g. the first word in the Hebrew Bible is anarthrous, although we are obliged to translate it with the article. Further, the Messiah the Prince has already been mentioned, and, therefore, comes somewhat into the region of proper names, as Amos vii. 12, "the sanctuary of king," instead of "the king;" so I Kings xxi. 13.²⁷

This verse does not specify how long after the end of the sixty-two-week period Messiah would suffer. That information is given in the final verse. The emphasis here is not on the time so much as the fact—that when the long-awaited Deliverer came, He would be murdered by those He came to save. The word translated *cut off* is used of the death penalty in Lev 7:20 and usually applies to a violent death. The expression is reminiscent of Isaiah's prediction concerning the Messiah—"he was cut off out of the land of the living" (Is 53:8).

"And shall have nothing." What a poignant

addition! Apparently the resulting achievement of the Messiah's death is nil. Complete and utter rejection, on the face of it, by both God and man, seems indicated. Of the people, none stood with Him. He had foretold, "You will be scattered, every man to his home, and will leave me alone" (Jn 16:32).

Next, the results for the nation He came to save are told. To reject God is to forfeit existence, and the catastrophe in AD 70 was a sign to all ages that the Jews had betrayed their Messiah and were no longer His people. The Torah forbade the offering of sacrifice at any place other than the temple at Jerusalem, and its destruction indicated that God had dissolved their worship as unacceptable (see Deut 12:13, 14).

In His last week Christ had often linked His death with the destruction of Jerusalem as cause and effect (see Mt 21:37-41; 23:37, 38; Lk 21:20-24; 23:28-31). Thus 9:26 speaks of the Messiah as bringing not only salvation to all who would afterward believe but also judgment on those who refused to believe (see Lk 2:34; Mal 3:1-6; 4:1-3).

The destruction is to be accomplished by the people of another prince, even the one "who is to come," that is, one foretold earlier. Dan 8:10-13 had predicted the coming of the destroyer of the sanctuary. The minute accuracy of our verse should be noted. Titus had wished to save the temple, but not so his people, who ultimately set it

alight contrary to orders. Thus the emphasis on "the people of the prince."

The term "flood" is used (1) as a symbol of an invading army (see 11:10, 22, 26; Is 8:7, 8) or (2) as a figure of a judgment destroying a city or a country (see Ps 32:6; Nah 1:8). Both meanings apply here.

Where the RSV has "its end," meaning the end of the city, some would translate "his end" meaning the end of the prince. The Hebrew is ambiguous, perhaps purposely, as implying first the end of the city and ultimately the end of the invader (as foretold at the close of the next verse, and also in 8:25 and 11:45).

"And to the end there shall be war; desolations are decreed." This "end" should not be equated with the "end" of the city mentioned earlier, for

the Hebrew word has neither a suffix nor an article. It means the end generally and corresponds to the end of all things (cf. 7:26; 12:13). Dan 8:13 had foretold that the site of the temple would remain desolate till "the time of the end" (8:17), after the little horn power overthrew the sanctuary. Thus from the destruction of literal Israel's holy city the prophecy extends to the continued devastations of the people of God through all time.²⁸ Christ does similarly in Mt 24, passing from the time of trouble connected with AD 70 to the trouble threatening the elect. Many commentators think that Christ's reference to "wars" in the Olivet discourse is drawn from this verse and from 11:40-45, which also mentions wars and rumors (tidings).

27⁴⁴ "And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week; and for half of the week he shall cause sacrifice and offering to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator."

Again we give a variety of translations, as opinion is sharply divided:

And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate (KJV).

High covenant he shall make, before another week is done, and with folks a many; but when that week has run half its course, offering and burnt-sacrifice shall be none; in the temple all shall be defilement and desolation, and until all is over, all is fulfilled, that desolation shall continue (Knox).²⁹

And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and for the half of the week [margin—"in the midst of"] he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate; and even unto the consummation, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolator (RV; see also NEB).

One should see immediately that the Messianic interpretation of the first part of this verse relieves it from apparent contradiction. Other interpreters would have antichrist both making a covenant and unmaking it, if he both solicits the Jews and yet cancels out their temple services. This verse, as with the preceding one, is stressing to Daniel that the fate of the city depends upon its response to the Messiah. Those who choose abominations rather than the Saviour will have a desolating abomination (persecution from idolaters) in their midst till the end of time.

AD 70 set the pattern for the rest of history as far as the Jewish nation is concerned. We repeat: It is the true Christ who is the great center of this amazing prophecy. The blessings of verse 24 are the result of His work. He is the One who comes in verse 25 and is "cut off" in verse 26. Likewise He is the One who makes strong, that is, "confirms," the covenant in verse 27. The only reference so far to the opposing prince has been one stressing his people rather than himself, and to make antichrist

the initiator of the covenant is to depart from the trend of the passage. In addition it must be stressed that the original does not speak of the *making* of a covenant, but of its ratification. The RSV rendering is interpretive, as other versions testify. Young says:

The writer does not mean to say that he will make a covenant. The ordinary idiom to express such a thought is "to cut a covenant," and this idiom is not used here. Now, if the writer had wished to state that a covenant would be *made*, why did he not employ the ordinary Hebrew idiom for expressing such a thought? Why did he use this strange phrase "cause to prevail" which appears in only one other passage of the OT, Ps 12:4?²⁰

Furthermore, the New Testament interprets this passage. In Mk 14:24 we read of One who in the seventieth week of years ratified the covenant for many.

Elsewhere we have given reasons why this seventieth week should not be detached from its predecessors. The whole period of 490 years is cut off from the larger period of the 2300 years. The verb used in verse 24 for "are decreed" is singular, not plural, indicating that the whole period is viewed as one. This could hardly be if a gap of centuries, indeed millennia, were to interfere between the close of the sixty-nine weeks and the opening of the seventieth.

"And for half of the week he shall cause sacrifice and offering to cease." This translation reflects the belief of the translators that Antiochus is referred to. It would be better translated "in the midst of the week . . ." as Young and many of the versions suggest.²¹ John's Gospel indicates that our Lord's ministry lasted half a week of years. The best commentary on this passage is Heb 10:4-9, where we read that Christ took away the typical offerings by His death. The account in the Gospels of the rending of the temple veil at the moment of Christ's death betokened the same truth.

More, however, should be said on this phrase. Its obvious parallelism to such passages as 8:11 indicates that the inspiring Spirit intends us to make some connection here between the work of the typical antichrist and the true Christ. Is He not saying in effect, "Do not be concerned because

antichrist causes outward religious services to be impossible. The day is coming when those who worship God will do so in spirit and in truth rather than in formal observances"? In other words, the same comfort given to the exiles by Jeremiah and Ezekiel is now being offered by Daniel (cf. Jer 3:16; 31:31; Eze 11:19). It would have been of tremendous encouragement during the time of the suspension of the sanctuary services by Antiochus. However, keep in mind that causing the services to cease (permanently) is far more significant than their temporary suspension.²²

The rest of the verse is full of puzzles, but puzzles open to solutions. The first part reads, "And upon the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate." Montgomery says of this clause—particularly referring to "wing"—that it "contains an obscure word which is further complicated by an unintelligible syntax."²³ He proceeds to show that all but one version translate otherwise, *the preference being for the word "temple" instead of "wing."* Thomson writes similarly:

The balance of evidence is decidedly in favour of . . . (*qodesh*), especially so in the light of our Lord's words. Had the text with which his hearers were familiar contained the suggestive word . . . [*kanaph*] "wing," it was impossible, speaking as he did of the setting up of the Roman eagles in the temple, to have avoided remarking on the word used. Our Lord in this case must have had the Hebrew before him, as he does not render as the Greek versions do, . . . [*epi to hieron*], but . . . [*en topō hagiō*]. We must thus hold . . . [*qodesh*] to have been the original text.²⁴

Young says, "The word [wing] apparently refers to the pinnacle of the temple."²⁵ Zöckler agrees.²⁶

Lastly, we read in verse 27: "Until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator." Our Lord, quoting this verse, spoke of "the abomination of desolation, . . . stand[ing] in the holy place." To Him the desolator and the abomination of desolation were the same. Rome is the antichrist both in AD 70 when it ravages the literal temple and through later ages when it oppresses the spiritual temple of the church (see Rev 11:2). The final antichrist who works according to the power

of Satan with all signs and lying wonders (2 Th 2) and whom He, Christ, will destroy with the brightness of His coming, is also comprehended within this symbol. "The son of perdition" in 2 Th 2 could equally well be translated "the son of desolation."³⁷ But as chapters 2, 7, 8, 11, all foretell the destruction of the destroyer of God's people, so does the prophecy in this verse. The "decreed end" is identical with the divine "indignation . . . determined," of 11:36 (cf. also Is 10:23; 28:22, the probable source of Daniel's terms).

Zöckler says of "decreed end": "utter extinction (annihilation) and consummation," "divinely determined annihilation, extirpation imposed as a judicial punishment."³⁸ Rev 14:10; 15:1; 16:1-20, with their allusions to judicial plagues being "poured out," help to explain this final statement in chapter 9. The situation is exactly parallel with the other chain prophecies of the book—the "desolator" or "breaker" (the fourth kingdom) is itself to be "broken," caused to "fail," brought "to his end."

Nothing has been said regarding an event at the end of the seventy weeks. During the seventy weeks the legitimacy of the sacrificial system ceased. Historically, however, the sacrifices continued for almost forty more years till the destruction of Jerusalem. Only in AD 70 was it seen what Christ had already done in effect. Similarly Christ, at the same time He dissolved the typical system, ushered in everlasting righteousness and made atonement for iniquity, although this has not yet had its public manifestation. Had Israel been faithful in preparing the Gentile world for the Messiah, the outward and final results of the Messiah's work, the kingdom of God, would also have come to that generation. Verse 24 thus should be read *after* verse 27 as well as in its present position.³⁹ It is to the prophecy its headstone or crown. What the Sabbath is to the week, so the seventieth week was to be to the entire period, ushering in rest from sin and consummating fellowship with God. The full accomplishment of this is yet future. No event, therefore, marking the end of the seventy weeks is given, because the period is also symbolic of the whole duration of time till the end.

Nevertheless, while the prophecy itself does

not tell of a climactic event at the end of the seventy weeks, it is right to point out that in AD 34, the actual close of the literal 490 years, the Jews sealed their rejection of the Christian gospel by stoning Stephen to death. That same year marked the calling of the Apostle to the Gentiles, the one who above all other merely human agents was responsible for the building of spiritual Israel, which ultimately will accomplish what literal Israel was intended to do.

³⁷ Fausset, on 9:4.

³⁸ Calvin, Vol. 2, pp. 150, 151.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 159.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 193.

⁴¹ Newell, p. 137.

⁴² Guinness, *Light for the Last Days*, pp. 146, 297, 306.

⁴³ Leupold, p. 413.

⁴⁴ Keil, p. 343.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 343, 344.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 344, 345.

⁴⁸ Leupold, p. 416.

⁴⁹ Zöckler, pp. 195, 196. See also Sigmund Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship*, trans. D. R. Ap-Thomas (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), Vol. I, p. 126.

⁵⁰ Leupold, p. 411. See also Keil, p. 340, where he affirms that the expressions apply "first to Israel after the flesh, and to the geographical Jerusalem . . . but at the same time embrace . . . the church of God on earth."

⁵¹ From *The Holy Bible—A translation from the Latin Vulgate in the light of the Hebrew and Greek originals* by Monsignor Roland Knox.

⁵² Smith and Goodspeed, *The Complete Bible: An American Translation*. Used by permission of the University of Chicago Press.

⁵³ From *The Amplified Bible and New Testament*. By permission of the Lockman Foundation.

⁵⁴ See Francis Brown, et al., *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1907), on *dabar*.

¹⁹ Boutflower, p. 187.

²⁰ Fausset on 9:24.

²¹ Bunch, pp. 134-136.

²² LeRoy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, 4 vols. (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald, 1946-54); Siegfried H. Horn and Lynn H. Wood, *The Chronology of Ezra 7*, 2nd ed. rev. (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald, 1970).

²³ Aubertin, p. 135.

²⁴ Boutflower, pp. 191, 192.

²⁵ Young, pp. 203, 204.

²⁶ As a part of 457 BC had elapsed by the time the decree of Artaxerxes went forth, so the complementary section of that year must be carried past AD 26 into the following year to give us 483 full years.

²⁷ Thomson, p. 271.

The RSV translation suggests two "anointed ones" in this prophecy, whereas the KJV has one. The former follows the punctuation marks devised by the Jews centuries after Christ. But the KJV has Hebrew parallelism, contemporary with and characteristic of the text, in its favor.

The original for "restore and build" consists of two verbs that are used identically twice in this passage. Similarly the word for "Messiah" is twice to be found. Thus the parallelism runs as follows:

"From the going forth of the word to *build again* Jerusalem To *Messiah* the Prince shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks.

The street and wall shall be *built again*. . . .
And after the sixty-two weeks *Messiah* shall be cut off."

See Robert C. Newman, "Daniel's Seventy Weeks and the Old Testament Sabbath-Year Cycle," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, Vol. 16: 4 (Fall, 1973), p. 232.

It is often objected that if this present prophecy refers to Christ, both He and the apostles would have made liberal use of it, whereas the New Testament does not indicate any such use. In reply we would point out that Mk 1:15 is almost certainly an allusion to the time of the seventy weeks viewed as Messianic by our Lord. Furthermore in Mk 13, Lk 21, and Mt 24 Christ foretells the destruction of the city that is about to crucify Him. This also is an allusion to the destruction of the city predicted in Dan 9:24-27 as a result of "cutting off" the Messiah (see Philip Carrington's commentary on Mark 13).

Thomson, on page xxiii, writes: "Too much is made of the fact that the apostles did not use this argument [the evidence of 9:24-27 for Jesus as the true Messiah]. We have only a small number of the sermons of the apostles, and we do not know all the lines of argument adopted by them. Further, Daniel was not so generally known, as it was not so regularly read in the synagogues as were some of the technical prophecies and the Megilloth. The apostles could not thus appeal to the words of Daniel, as they could to prophecies familiar to the ear of the

audience. Again, the argument from 'the seventy weeks' implied an accurate knowledge of history and a power of calculating that could scarcely be expected from an ordinary audience. But again the implied argument proves too much, and therefore it proves nothing. If it were worth anything, it should prove that Daniel was not known in the era of our Lord, but that may be easily demonstrated to be false."

²⁸ Lk 21:24 foretells that after its destruction the temple city would never again be in the hands of God's people. The present-day Jews are no longer the Israel of God, and thus the prophecy remains true. See Rev 11:2 for the spiritual application.

²⁹ See fn 15.

³⁰ Young, p. 209.

³¹ If we retain the other rendering, we would think of our Lord's ministry as a process of superseding of the sacrificial system, which culminated in His death and which had universal application when believing Gentiles were released from the laws of Moses (Acts 11:18).

³² Aubertin, p. 164f.

³³ Montgomery, *ICC—Daniel*, p. 386.

³⁴ Thomson, p. 274.

³⁵ Young, p. 218.

³⁶ Zöckler, p. 204.

³⁷ It is well known that Paul's terminology was influenced by the LXX. The word *apōleia* and its cognates occur often in the LXX. Eze 29:12 is an instance where *apōleian* is used as a synonym for *erēmōsin*. The Hebrew root *shamem* exists three times in this verse and underlies both these words. While the range of meaning for *apōleia* in the LXX extends from the idea of "calamity" to that of "death," the common conceptual factor is always that of "ruin," which of course is also basic to *shamem*. Thus the expression *bdelugma tēs erēmōseōs* would have many connotations to the reader of the LXX. While primarily it would be reminiscent of the phrase in Daniel, its component parts would carry the nuances of lawlessness in all its forms, but particularly idolatry and also the ruin that lawlessness always brought in its train.

The phrases *anthrōpos tēs anomias* and *hōsios tēs apōleias* do not stand a great way off in meaning from the fearful and hateful *bdelugma tēs erēmōseōs*. When it is remembered that the special sin of "the son of perdition" is the idolatry involved in his demand for worship, it is evident that the thought of such a character would fulfill exactly what is intended by the phrase from Daniel.

³⁸ Zöckler, p. 204.

³⁹ "Vers. 25-27 present what shall be done in the course of the seventy weeks, which are divided into three periods, but ver. 24 what shall be the result of all these things" (Keil, p. 374).

Excursus on Daniel 9:24

It would be tragic if we contented ourselves with an analytical examination of this passage of Scripture. It is not merely a scintillating gem to be admired, but the bread of life to be eaten. It consists of "the everlasting gospel" in miniature.

That which should concern us all more than the issues of hermeneutics is the issue of life—our life. Not minutiae of prophetic interpretation, but sin, sorrow, death, constitute our problems. Dan 9:24 assures us that the world is a ship and not an iceberg, that God is intensely interested in our dilemma, and best of all, that He has done something to extricate us from the apparent cul-de-sac of existence. In Christ He has captured, judged, and destroyed the sin that mars our peace and threatens our continued life. In Christ He has brought in everlasting righteousness freely offered to all who believe.

The verse we are contemplating sets forth the divine solution to the greatest problem of the universe. To every creature the Creator gave the gift of free will in order that worship and obedience might ever proceed from loving, willing hearts. But man has abused that freedom. He has despised his Best Friend and has gone his own way—a way that leads to disappointment, frustration, sorrow, and death. How could God show His repulsion against sin, the destroyer, yet save man, the

sinner, whom He loved? How are justice and mercy to be reconciled? How can peace and truth kiss each other? How can the Father of a rebel race be the true King also, upholding right and punishing wrong? How can He forgive and save the sinner and yet demonstrate that His law is immutable and that lasting peace and joy come only through perfect obedience?

When the rebellion of sin transpired, two things were necessary to safeguard all creation: (1) the law must be vindicated by requiring the punishment for its violation, and (2) the rebels must be transformed into law-loving citizens. The King of the universe needed to forgive His erring sons in such a manner as to change their hearts and bring them into complete harmony with His will. Thus the cross!

The death of Christ was not the arbitrary placing upon an innocent third party the penalty belonging to another. No! It was the offended God Himself personally accepting the guilt of sinners and paying their debt. "In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself" (2 Cor 5:19). Thus, and thus only, could He "be just, and the justifier" (Rom 3:26, KJV). He honors the law by exacting the penalty; He transforms the sinner by the melting display of His love. Thus the lost may be saved, and yet the "ninety and nine just

persons" of the sinless universe not be endangered.

As we behold the cross, the primary glimpse of a dying man is replaced by our perception of a suffering God. Love and hatred, good and evil, are revealed by contrast as the Creator endures what the creature deserves. As we continue to gaze it becomes apparent that we are all there on that cross! We died at three o'clock, black Friday, AD 31. We were ruined ages before, without our personal participation, by the first Adam. At Calvary, again without our personal participation, we were redeemed by the second Adam. As Adam represented the race in Eden, so Christ, the second Adam, represents humanity at the cross. "One has died for all; therefore all have died" (2 Cor 5:14). In Christ all men legally died and paid the price for their sins. Therefore, "whosoever will, may come," and "all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men." God "is faithful *and just* to forgive us our sins" because the claims of the righteous, eternal law have been met and we have died in our Substitute and Representative. God will not ask us to pay the price a second time if we abide in Christ. "Ye are complete in him," "accepted in the beloved." "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." Christ was made what He was not, that we might be made what we are not.

Therefore, despite a million sermons to the contrary, the gospel is not good advice. It is Good News! Advice is about something I should do, but news concerns something already done, and done by someone else. The gospel is the Good News that in God's sight sin—*my sin*—has been made an end of; that transgression—*my transgression*—is finished; that iniquity—*my iniquity*—has been atoned for. Everlasting righteousness has been brought in for *me*. All that God requires of me for time and eternity has already been achieved by Himself in the person of His Son. That achievement is credited to anyone, however vile, who believes the news, and always results in a subsequent Christ-centered life with intense

concern for the performance of the divine will in all things.

Despite my sin and selfishness, there is no need for my trying to reconcile God. He is already reconciled, and He asks us, "Be ye reconciled." God is offering something, not demanding something.

Dan 9:24 is ever relevant, ever new. In our age when millions are striving after some religious experience of power or ecstasy, the Good News of a salvation objectively, historically accomplished needs to be sounded forth to all seekers. Men must be reminded that their acceptance with God does not depend upon anything other than appropriation of what Christ has done. This appropriation will change me, but I am not accepted because of that change, nor am I rejected because the change may be slow and very incomplete in the here and now. I need not be anxious about what God thinks of me, but only what God thinks of Christ, my Substitute. I am not to blaspheme His grace by thinking that I must be free from sin before trusting His power to save. I must come to Him, just as I am—sinful, helpless, dependent.

The divine plan involves our complete rescue from sin—from its guilt, its power, and its presence. Our acceptance of Calvary brings the first; our dependence upon the living interceding Christ brings the second; and His return accomplishes the last. The work is His, though received by our faith. Objectively Christ is all; subjectively faith is all.

Therefore look back to the cross of our Messiah and Prince—that brings the faith that justifies; look forward to the Coming which will consummate the everlasting righteousness already legally achieved—that brings the hope that sanctifies; look upward to the throne where He ministers in the holy of holies, the anointed sanctuary, as our High Priest—that brings the love which satisfies. This is the message of Dan 9:24-27—it is the "everlasting gospel"—Good News indeed!

Preface to Daniel 10

Importance and Purpose

This chapter, as with the first twenty-three verses of the previous one, is too often speedily dealt with, as though constituting an unnecessary barrier to "the real thing"—the prophecy which follows. But here, as in chapter 9, an understanding of the narrative portion is vital in order to be able to plumb the depths of the revelation that follows.

Chapters 10 to 12 constitute a unit wherein this chapter is the prologue and 12 is the epilogue. The very size of this prologue indicates the importance of what follows. *Daniel's final prophecy* is a fitting capstone to all that has preceded it, and it is the continued literal expansion of the previous symbolic portrayals. To be specific in explaining the earlier outlines and hazy on this one is to reverse the intention of the Divine Author. Furthermore, all earlier interpretations can be tested by the plain statements here to be found. Particularly those portions of the earlier prophecies concerning the latter days are now enlarged. That is to say, the earlier climaxes—the smiting of the image by the stone, the judgment scene and the coming of the Son of man in the clouds, the "cleansing" of the sanctuary, the pouring out of "the decreed end" upon the abominable desolator, and the establishment of "everlasting

righteousness"—all these are now elaborated in plain language.

Setting

The historical setting of this chapter is the third year of Cyrus. The exiles have been given freedom to return and rebuild the temple. Yet we find the prophet not rejoicing but mourning. Why?

First of all, why is he there at all, in a Gentile land, instead of returning to the holy mountain he loved? He is there still that he might remain a power behind the throne on behalf of his people. Not only his advanced age but the possibility of further service keeps him where he is. But instead of singing psalms at the good fortune of Israel, we find him chastening his body. The news from Palestine was not good. The situation in Babylonia also was not cheering. Only a comparative handful of the Jewish captives had availed themselves of the privilege of returning. The others had settled down comfortably in their adopted land.

Those at Jerusalem experienced hard times, for these days were the beginning of that "troubled time" foretold in 9:25. The depressing circumstances surrounding the beginning of the work of restoration brought sorrow (see Ezz 3). In addition, the returned exiles faced trouble from the Samaritans. Ezz 4 shows that from the second year

of the return, the work of rebuilding lapsed as a result of Samaritan interference. Applications to the Persian court by the enemies of the Jews seemed certain to prevent the accomplishment of anything worthwhile at Jerusalem. Besides, many even of those who returned to the Holy Land were much more concerned with the building of comfortable homes for themselves than with the reestablishment of the temple.

Not yet is the tale complete. Other matters agitated the aged prophet. The most recent revelation granted him declared that when the Messiah, that Great Prince, did come, He would be rejected by His own people, and as a result fresh abominations would arise. What did it all mean? It looked almost as though Yahweh were surrendering the helm.

Chapter 10 Lifts the Veil Between Heaven and Earth

Thus the reasons for Daniel's fast are ready to hand. And these reasons cast much light upon what follows. Chapter 10 is unique in Scripture as portraying the invisible conflict between good and evil angels in the great controversy between Christ and Satan. Here we are encouraged to believe in the help of invisible but potent allies. It is here that we learn that events on earth are the outcome of events in the "heavenlies," that what transpires down here below is dependent upon prior resolutions and prior conflicts among the original protagonists of the supernatural realm. This unique presentation has fascinated many expositors. Some of their comments are worthy of study.

While in the lower plane of history the nations themselves do these things; in the higher sphere it is their angels who are the actors.¹

Perhaps no single verse in the whole of the Scriptures speaks more clearly than this (v. 13) upon the invisible powers which rule and influence nations. . . . Revelation points out that as spiritual beings carry out God's purpose in the natural world (Ex 12:23; 2 Sam 24:16) and in the moral world (Lk 15:10), so also they do in the political world. From this chapter we not only learn that Israel had a spiritual champion (v. 21) to protect her in her national life, and to watch over her interests, but also that the powers opposed to Israel had their princes, or

saviours, which were antagonists of those which watched over Israel. The "princes" of the heathen powers are devils, according to 1 Cor 10:[20, 21]. . . . Further passages in the New Testament bearing upon the question are 1 Cor 8:5; Col 1:16.²

The prince of the kingdom of Persia, that is, one of the angels, who, under Satan, the prince of the powers of the air, the ruler of the darkness of this world, . . . exercises power in this lower world, especially in thwarting the advancement of the Kingdom of God, and in disturbing the peace, and in marring the prosperity of His Church. . . .

Daniel here reveals to us (what is more clearly displayed in the New Testament) that the Evil One has still great power in this lower world; and that he has evil angels which do his work in the kingdoms of earth. Satan knew well that the return of the Hebrew People to Jerusalem, and the restoration of the Temple at Jerusalem, were steps in advance toward the Advent of Christ, and toward the Evangelical dispensation of His acts and sufferings, by which Satan's own kingdom would be destroyed, and toward that future final consummation in which all the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of the Lord and of His Christ (Rev 11:15).³

While Satan was striving to influence the highest powers in the kingdom of Medo-Persia to show disfavor to God's people, angels worked in behalf of the exiles. The controversy was one in which all heaven was interested. Through the prophet Daniel we are given a glimpse of this mighty struggle between the forces of good and the forces of evil. For three weeks Gabriel wrestled with the powers of darkness, seeking to counteract the influences at work on the mind of Cyrus; and before the contest closed, Christ Himself came to Gabriel's aid.⁴

In connection with these statements, remember that Daniel contains apocalyptic prophecy, which is specially characterized by its cosmic quality, its viewing of earthly events from the standpoint of the great spiritual controversy between Christ and Satan. In view of all this it is important to grasp the significance of the *present chapter as an integrating and interpretive key* to the whole book, particularly chapters 8, 9, 11, and 12—all of which mention the sanctuary, and all of which consist of a recital from different angles of the conflict concerning the sanctuary and its worshipers.

Dan 8:24, In Anticipation of Chapter 10, Also Lifts the Veil

8:24 in the original is a passage so puzzling that the RSV has relegated it to a footnote as though a doublet of a similar phrase in verse 22. There are, however, no real textual grounds for omitting the clause. It reads "but not with his power," or as Keil gives it, "not by his own might." Rev 12:3 offers the best explanation when it pictures the might of antichrist as being bestowed by Satan himself. Rome in her persecutions was but the earthly manifestation of Satan's wrath against "the woman" and "her offspring," or to put it another way, against the tabernacle and its worshipping host (see Rev 12:4, 13, 17; 13:2, 5, 6; and Dan 8:10-13). The fallen archangel, rather than merely a worldly kingdom, is the focus of all Daniel's prophecies about the abominable power desolating the sanctuary.

The Sanctuary Conflict in Chapter 10 Illuminates Chapter 8

Thus Daniel 10, which speaks of the conflict between supernatural beings over the rebuilding of the sanctuary, points back to chapters 8 and 9 and forward to 11 and 12 and in effect declares concerning the sanctuary, which is mentioned by all of them: "The temple of God on earth, with the controversy raging around it, is a microcosm of the kingdom of God and the conflict between Christ and Satan."

Chapter 8 is the climactic symbolic presentation of the chief theme of Daniel—the great controversy between good and evil as shadowed

forth by the conflict between Babylon's worship and Jerusalem's worship—and chapters 11 and 12 relate the climax of the literal explanation of this symbolic presentation. Chapter 10, standing between the symbolic climax of the book (chapter 8) and the zenith of its interpretation (chapters 11 and 12) is a "Mr. Facing-both-ways," casting light on each. It says about chapter 8, "Don't be misled. This has to do with more than just a building, with one tiny group of people in a small geographical area. This vision prefigures the war between good and evil, the kingdom of God represented by Jerusalem's sanctuary and the kingdom of Satan represented by Babylon." Concerning chapters 11 and 12, it testifies, "Now here is the meaning of the symbols with which we have been dealing. Here is the outcome of that terrible struggle. Christ and His people are to be victors. The wicked will be judged and condemned, while the righteous, the worshipers at God's sanctuary, will be vindicated. The whole universe will be restored to its rightful estate by the complete abolition of sin and the establishment of everlasting righteousness."

To any who think we are inflating the case, we would draw attention to the introductory statement of 10:1: "The word was true, and it was a great conflict." That is, this final revelation spelled out the elements of a terrible struggle—even that struggle which began in heaven and will terminate when Michael stands up at the end of time.

Further evidence, found in the last book of Scripture, interprets the chief sanctuary passage of Daniel as follows:

Daniel 8

It grew great, even to the host of heaven; and some of the host of the stars it cast down to the ground, and trampled upon them (v. 10).

The host was given over (v. 12). He shall . . . destroy mighty men and the people of the saints (v. 24).

It magnified itself, even up to the Prince of the host (v. 11).

Revelation 12, 13, 14

His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth (12:4).

Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them (13:7).

It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God . . . (13:6).

And the place of his sanctuary was overthrown (v. 11).

His power shall be great, [but not with his power (fn)] (v. 24).

For two thousand and three hundred evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state (v. 14).

But, by no human hand, he shall be broken (v. 25).

The Book of Revelation thus applies the vision of chapter 8 to the great controversy between Christ and Satan. The little horn is unveiled as being primarily Satan himself, and the sanctuary is shown to be a comprehensive symbol for the worshippers of God in heaven and earth. Furthermore, the restoring of the sanctuary, as far as the Revelator is concerned, is the last judgment and the prelude to the new earth.

Chapter 10—a Revelation of the Glory of the Messiah, the Prince of the Sanctuary

Notice that not only the *sanctuary* motif from chapter 10 is found on both sides of that chapter and in the last apocalypse of the Scriptures, but also the *Michael* motif (see Dan 10:5, 6, 13, 21; Rev 12:7; see also Dan 8:13, 16). In chapter 10 we first have in this book an obvious theophany (see vs. 5, 6). As Keil says, "The . . . ['*ʾĕl*h] seen by Daniel was no common angel-prince, but a manifestation of Jehovah, i.e. the Logos. This is placed beyond a doubt by a comparison with Rev i. 13-15."⁵

This is also the first chapter in the book to name Michael, "the first of the chief princes" (v. 13, original). The comparison of 12:1; Jn 5:28; 1 Th 4:16; and Jude 9 with this present chapter makes it clear that Michael is Christ. It was Michael who gave the prophecy of 8:14. He ordered Gabriel to make Daniel "understand the vision." It is Michael who takes the kingdom of men at the last and delivers His people (see 12:1 and cf. 7:13, 14). *This last section of Daniel, beginning with the present chapter, has for a*

. . . blaspheming his name and his dwelling [or sanctuary] (13:6).

And to it the dragon gave his power (13:2).

Fear God and give him glory, for the hour of his judgment has come (14:7).

So the angel . . . gathered the vintage of the earth, and threw it into the great wine press of the wrath of God (14:19).

major objective the depicting of the ultimate victory of that Messiah whom the previous chapter had destined to be "cut off."

Daniel had witnessed many tragic portrayals. He had seen the saints trodden underfoot by the abomination of desolation, the antichrist. He had seen the sanctuary laid waste and the continual burnt offering taken from the Prince of the host. He had heard from Gabriel that that same Prince, even Messiah the Prince, was to have a fate similar to that of the sanctuary. He would be cast down, trodden underfoot, so to speak. Now after seventy years of persistence in seeking for understanding, in upholding the truth by word and deed, Daniel is given a vision of the Messiah's glory. He sees Him in His preincarnate state as Michael and is assured of His ultimate victory.

Just as the beasts of chapter 7 had been emblematic of the terrors of the world powers, so the description of Michael reveals to Daniel the characteristics of His kingdom. No other vision had the effect upon Daniel that this revelation had. So glorious was it that a single glance prostrated him. Three times he is addressed, and three times he is strengthened by an angel's touch. Finally, after having been raised to his knees and ultimately to his feet, he hears the strengthening words: "O man greatly beloved, fear not, peace be with you; be strong and of good courage" (v. 19). What were the things he noticed in the single glance that cast him into a swoon?

The face "like the appearance of lightning" told of dignity and majesty, intelligence and goodwill. The eyes "like flaming torches"

symbolized penetration, the sure ability to discern between good and evil. The body "like beryl" indicated transparency and purity, for beryl is a transparent stone with a refulgence like gold. The linen clothing girded with a golden girdle indicated one who was both a priest and a king. The voice "like the noise of a multitude" represented authority with ability more than enough to deal with the horn that spoke "great things." Only two other accounts of Scripture resemble this one, the Transfiguration and the vision of the glorified Christ at Patmos (Rev 1). All three visions speak of the glory of the returning Messiah, who once was cut off and left with apparently nothing, who once died but behold, is "alive for evermore" (Rev 1:18).

This final section of Daniel assures that, despite the unspeakable trials of the people of God, their risen and returning Lord is great enough to redeem them out of all trouble, yea, even from the dead (see 12:2). Then their faces will shine like His in the kingdom of God (12:3).

Keil has seen this truth from another angle. He declares concerning this chapter that "the form is in the most intimate manner connected with the contents of the revelation."⁶ Then he explains:

The effect of His appearance on Daniel formed a preintimation and a pledge of that which would happen to the people of Daniel in the future. As Daniel was thrown to the ground by the divine majesty of the man clothed in linen, but was raised up again by a supernatural hand, so shall the people of God be thrown to the ground by the fearful judgments that shall pass over them, but shall again be raised up by the all-powerful help of their God and His angel-prince Michael, and shall be strengthened to endure the tribulation.⁷

Not only the sanctuary and antichrist, who are present in chapters 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, are found in Rev 12-14, but so is Michael (see Rev 12:7). Thus the Daniel sanctuary chapters symbolically portray the great conflict between Christ (Michael) and antichrist (Satan and his earthly cohorts).⁸

The Relationship Between Chapters 10-12 and 8:1-14

In affirming that this final section of Daniel,

beginning with chapter 10, enlarges the themes of 8:1-14 we have not said anything really new. Those who helped to launch the great Second Advent movement of the nineteenth century were confident of the same thing. Note the following from William Miller:

Gabriel, after giving the history of the seventy weeks, dwells not in detail on the remainder of the vision, but reserves a more detailed account for the next visit, which is given unto us in the 10th to the 12th chapter of Daniel inclusive.⁹

And in the *Prophetic Expositions* of Josiah Litch we have as follows:

In like manner, the memorable events, which were revealed to Daniel in the vision of the ram and he-goat, are here again more clearly and explicitly revealed in his last vision by an angel; so that this latter prophecy may not improperly be said to be a comment and explanation of the former.¹⁰

Ellen White comments:

Upon the occasion just described [Dan 9], the angel Gabriel imparted to Daniel all the instruction he was then able to receive. A few years afterward, however, the prophet desired to learn more of subjects not yet fully explained, and again set himself to seek light and wisdom from God. . . . No less a personage than the Son of God appeared to Daniel. Our Lord comes with another heavenly messenger to teach Daniel what would take place in the latter days.¹¹

The key verse of chapter 10 is certainly verse 14. We believe that the rendering of the revised version is the most accurate translation of this verse: "Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for the vision is yet for many days."

W. J. Fitzgerald has commented on this verse:

If chapter 10 were introducing a new vision, there is one word in v. 14 that could not be there. It is the word *yet*. That word *yet* signifies that the vision of days under consideration had already been partially explained; that some of the days of the vision had already been dealt with and that the vision of days, some of whose days had already been explained, still extended into the future many days. . . . It would not have been proper for Gabriel to have stated it thus to

Daniel if a new vision were being introduced, but having already explained a portion—490 years—of the vision of days in question, it was proper for him to say, "Yet the vision is for many days."¹²

In the first verse of this final section of Daniel there are connecting parallels with the prophecy of chapter 8. Compare the following:

And he understood the word and had *understanding of the vision* (10:1).

Understand . . . that the vision is for the time of the end (8:17).

I have now come out to give you . . . *understanding* (9:22).

Consider the word and *understand* the vision (9:23).

While the term "the vision" is used in 10:7 for the appearance of Gabriel, it is doubtful that the expression is so applied in verse 1. Verse 14 obviously does not refer to the same as verse 7, as it could hardly be said that the appearance of the heavenly messenger would endure for many days. It is more likely that verse 1 and verse 14 both refer to the vision of chapter 8. In chapters 8 and 9 there are thirteen references to the prophecy of Daniel 8 as "the vision." The reference to "many days" in 10:14 (KJV) is an echo of the same phrase in 8:26 concerning the vision of the 2300 days. The allusion to "the vision" in 11:14 similarly must mean some other vision than that of the verbal revelation of chapter 11 itself. So far as the Book of Daniel is concerned, 8:1-16 is preeminently "the vision."

Likewise, the words *understand* and *understanding* in 10:1 refer back to 8:16, 17, 19, 27 and 9:22, 23, where these words or their equivalents appear.

Several translations suggest an interesting variant from the KJV for a portion of 10:1 that also would evidently connect this prophecy with the preceding. "And the word was true, and it was a great conflict" (RSV). "The true revelation of a great conflict" (Moffatt). "Here is truth indubitable, and a great host" (Knox).

Concerning this alternative rendering, in Cook's commentary we read:

An excessively difficult clause, owing to the

abruptness of the present Hebrew text. . . . Literally and in their order the words of the sentence are "and truth (is) the word and a great host." Comparing this with viii. 12 the sense would seem to be:—the word of God now revealed to Daniel was about the subjects alluded to in the previous vision, ch. viii., "the truth" cast down and the "host" given to the little horn. The clause may therefore be taken as a kind of title or designation of the section. . . . Chapter xi, etc. is the amplification of this revelation.¹³

Considering these points, it seems evident that the text 10:1, 14, indicates that the purpose of this final prophecy is indeed to delineate the events of the 2300 days not explained previously, as pioneers of the Second Advent movement in the nineteenth century contended. Thus it would apply to the remaining 1810 years of this great time period and beyond into "the time of the end." The first 490 years had to do with literal Israel, but the larger portion concerns spiritual Israel. Further evidence of this is found by comparing the terminal points of the prophecies in chapters 8 and 10-12:

The vision is for the *time of the end* (8:17).

And some of those who are wise shall fall, . . . until the *time of the end* (11:35).

At the *time of the end* the king of the south shall attack him (11:40).

But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, until the *time of the end* (12:4).

For the words are shut up and sealed until the *time of the end* (12:9).

But go your way till the end; and you shall rest, and shall stand in your allotted place at the end of the days (12:13).

These verses demonstrate that the 2300 days reach to the same point described at the close of the prophecy of chapters 10-12. According to 12:1-3 this time of the end ushers in the kingdom of Christ and the resurrection of the dead.

There are other parallels between the final remarks of each of these visions. Compare these:

Behold, I will make known to you what shall be at the *latter end of the indignation*; for it pertains to the appointed time of the end (8:19).

And the king . . . shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished; for what is determined shall be done (11:36).

He shall come to his end, with none to help him (v. 45).

How long shall it be to the end of these wonders? . . . It would be for a time, two times, and half a time; and that when the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end all these things would be accomplished (12:6, 7).

The thought of termination, of destruction of the wicked, is prominent in each prophecy, and identical terms are employed.

It is clearly stated that during that period of time before the setting up of the kingdom, the period called "the time of the end," the Book of Daniel would be unsealed and knowledge concerning its prophecies would be greatly increased. This must mean particularly the time prophecy of chapter 8, as most of the other predictions were never sealed. The preview of the work of Medo-Persia, Greece, and pagan Rome has never had a seal attached to it. But the prophetic period of 2300 years was not to be understood until the dawning of its fulfillment.

A further demonstration of the affinity between these prophecies is found by comparing 8:12-14 with 12:7, where the same personalities, place, and questions are described. Thus it is apparent that the "time, two times, and half a time" of 12:7 and 7:25 fall within the greater period of 2300 days. Inasmuch as the former belongs to a power that was to succeed the tenfold division of the Roman Empire, it is obvious that the 2300 days must extend well down toward the end of the Christian dispensation.

New Testament confirmation of this fact is found in Rev 10:6, 7, where Dan 12:7 is quoted and it is declared that "there should be no more delay, but that in the days of the trumpet call to be sounded by the seventh angel, the mystery of God, as he announced to his servants the prophets, should be fulfilled" (Rev 10:6, 7). In this setting we find a little book open and a time proclamation concerning the finishing, or the end, of the work of God in the earth. Vitally associated with this picture is the command to measure the sanctuary after it had been trodden down for forty and two months, that is, the time, two times, and half a time of 12:7.

Chapter 12 of Daniel, by more than seven allusions to the language of Dan 8, demonstrates its kinship of meaning with the earlier prophecy. Review the references to the shutting up or sealing of the prophecy, the time of the end, the increase of knowledge or understanding, the figures of Gabriel and Christ by the river, the question, How long the scattering of the holy people, the daily sacrifice being taken away, the end of the days, etc. These terms are common to both chapters 8 and 12 and cannot be without significance. One more example should suffice:

It pertains to the appointed time of *the end* (8:19).

But go your way till *the end*; and you shall rest, and shall stand in your allotted place at *the end* of the days (12:13).

The cumulative evidence from chapters 10-12 is conclusive that the 2300 days extend to the final work of the church, a work that will run parallel with the taking away of the dominion of the little-horn power as many begin to walk in the light of Daniel's unsealed prophecies. At the same time the persecuted and despised saints of God—among them Daniel the prophet—shall stand in their lot, to be vindicated before heaven and earth and to "shine like the brightness of the firmament . . . for ever and ever" (12:3). After the 2300 days comes the time of the end, the finishing of the mystery of God, and then the awakening of multitudes from the dust of the earth.

Such an interpretation is worthy of the character of the Author of the prophecy and consistent with the grandeur of the other chain prophecies that point to the close of the great controversy.

Summary

The evidence given that the closing chapters of Daniel enlarge the vision of chapter 8 is not only a guide to the correct interpretation of each section but also a demonstration of the depth of significance in the events portrayed. Chapter 10 assures us that all heaven is interested and involved in the controversy over the sanctuary and its worshiping host. No mere incident in the days of the Maccabees is in focus, but rather the conflict of the ages. In 10:1 Daniel declared concerning

Gabriel's message that it was "the true revelation of a great conflict" (Moffatt). Thus the theme of 8:11-14, which the later chapters expand, is the theme not only of the entire Book of Daniel but of all Scripture. The promised "unsealing" of Daniel in these latter days has particular reference to these climactic verses and their relationship to the soon-coming kingdom of glory. Dan 10 is strategically placed as a significant pause intended to lead the reader to such truths as we have endeavored to indicate.

¹ Thomson, p. 296.

² Deane, 5:390.

³ Wordsworth, 6:50.

⁴ White, *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 571, 572.

⁵ Keil, p. 410.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 404.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 405.

⁸ The Nestle edition of the Greek New Testament has a reference to 8:10 appended to the margin of 12:4 in order to show the source of the Revelator's terminology.

No one questions that chapters 12 and 13 of Revelation have to do with the great controversy between Christ and Satan, but it has not always been recognized that the same is the case in Dan 8. This should have been seen by the reference to the Prince of princes made in this chapter, and by virtue of the fact that this prophecy, like the last one in Daniel, is apocalyptic in form, and therefore cosmic in scope. Commentators have been so busy gazing at Antiochus Epiphanes that this key phrase "Prince of princes" has not been seen in its true significance. Likewise, it has often been recognized that Rev 12 and 13 allude to Dan 7, particularly 7:25, but what has not been noticed is that there is no specific mention of the tabernacle in this latter passage.

The reference to the tabernacle or sanctuary in Rev 13 is based on Dan 8, just as the reference to blasphemy in Rev 13 springs not only from 7:25 but also from 8:23-25. Thus 8:14, as well as Rev 13:5, 6, deals with the age-long warfare against God and not merely with an incident during the second century BC.

Many non-Adventist interpreters have pointed out that the dragon of Rev 12, besides representing Rome in the secondary

sense, primarily refers to Satan. Verse 9 declares, "And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him." Similarly in Dan 8 the symbol that stands for Rome represents also the wicked apiritual power that energized it. That Is 14 and Eze 28 in their references to the rulers of Babylon and Tyre signify Satan primarily has long been a commonplace belief with Bible students, and we would recognize that this same principle is found in Dan 8. No mere episode in intertestamental history is here being focused upon by the prophet, except possibly in an apologetic sense. On the other hand, that interpretation which understands the prophet as employing a symbol referring both to an earthly power and to Satan working through it is not a novel viewpoint, but rather one based upon both Old and New Testament procedure.

Rev 13 states that not only the sanctuary or tabernacle but the name or character of God as well have been blasphemed, thus the justifying of the sanctuary is the clearing of God's character from the slanders of Satan, the unmasking of Satan before the universe, and the terminating of his attacks upon the saints on earth below and in heaven above. It should ever be kept in mind that the meaning of devil is "slanderer," and what we find him doing through his serpent medium in the opening pages of Holy Writ is identical with his initial attack in heaven and all his subsequent activities. To Eve God was pictured as a hard taskmaster, and this has been perpetuated by the antichrist of history with its doctrines of salvation by works, purgatory, hellfire. These have indeed blasphemed God's name. Therefore, the justifying of the sanctuary must involve a work that will reveal God as holy and righteous and a message setting forth the true gospel. No other transaction but the judgment could trace fully all God's dealings through the centuries and vindicate His actions and character before the universe.

⁹ William Miller, *Evidence From Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ* (Boston: B. B. Mussey, 1840), pp. 70, 71.

¹⁰ Josiah Litch, *Prophetic Expositions* (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1842), Vol. II, p. 4.

¹¹ Ellen G. White, *The Sanctified Life* (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald, 1937), pp. 49, 50.

¹² W. J. Fitzgerald, "The Time of the End" (unpublished manuscript), p. 1.

¹³ F. C. Cook, ed., *The Holy Bible With an Explanatory and Critical Commentary* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1890), Vol. VI, p. 366.

Commentary on Daniel 10

1 In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a word was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar. And the word was true, and it was a great conflict. And he understood the word and had understanding of the vision.

2 In those days I, Daniel, was mourning for three weeks. ³I ate no delicacies, no meat or wine entered my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, for the full three weeks.

Many of the details of this chapter have already been commented upon in the preface, and for apparent omissions here we refer the reader to that section.

Deane begins his commentary on this chapter by saying that it "is partly supplemental to chapters 8, 9, and introduces details with regard to the fourth Empire."¹ As shown in the preface, this is the usual understanding of most commentators. Even the starting point, "the third year of Cyrus," corresponds with the visions of the previous two chapters, each of which commences with events in the days of the Medo-Persian monarchy when Israel set about her work of reestablishing the temple.

Thus our chapter begins at the time of Israel's new beginning. The seventy years of punishment are over and a new start is being made at Jerusalem. The decree from Cyrus permitting the

Jews to return ended the prophetic period forecast by Jeremiah and also, when confirmed and enforced by the two later decrees of Darius and Artaxerxes, marked the commencement of the time periods of the seventy weeks and the 2300 days (see Ezr 6:14). The sanctuary is the central focus of these prophetic periods and the chapters recording them, as well as this tenth chapter.

Daniel fasts and prays because messages from the returned exiles confirm Gabriel's prediction about troublous times in connection with the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the sanctuary (see 9:25). Ezr 4:1-6 states that "all the days of Cyrus," enemies of the Jews tried to frustrate their purpose. Daniel had remained in the land of captivity in order to use his influence there on behalf of his people, but even more important, as this chapter shows, is his influence with Heaven.

Although about ninety years of age, the seer

does not pamper himself. He undertakes a fast that his mind might be clear for communing with God. A full stomach means an oppressed mind. Every scholar knows the vital connection between his eating habits and his mental pursuits. In addition to this principle, Daniel's sorrow over the affairs of his people would have rendered dietary delicacies less acceptable. Such self-denial is almost a lost sacrament. Matthew Henry comments aptly on Daniel's concern over matters in Judah: "Good men cannot but mourn to see how slowly the work of God goes on in the world and what opposition it meets with, how weak its friends are and how active its enemies."²

The prophet tells us at the outset that the revelation now vouchsafed him concerned a great conflict and much suffering. "The suffering of the people of God is the burden of practically the entire revelation—the things they must suffer at the hands of Antichrist."³ Daniel's understanding of the future is becoming progressively clearer, though some details connected with the last days,

particularly the time elements, remain obscure to him (see 12:8, 1-4). God usually gives us only as much light as we need for our daily warfare.

The expression *shetoshah shabulm yamim* is literally "three weeks of days." This wording distinguishes these weeks from those of the previous chapter and thus implies the meaning that most modern translations adopt for the latter, namely "weeks of years." Those who deny this are at a loss to explain why in one passage concerning weeks Daniel adds "of days" but not in the other nearby.

This three weeks of mourning included the Passover season and thus the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Usually at that season most Israelites used the "bread of affliction" (Deut 16:3), but this was the only item of food that indicated self-denial in what was actually a festival season. Daniel goes beyond what is required, because of his awareness that only when the things of the flesh are made subordinate to those of the spirit can great things be accomplished.

⁴On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river, that is, the Tigris, ⁵I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold, a man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with gold of Uphaz. ⁶His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and the sound of his words like the noise of a multitude. ⁷And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision, but a great trembling fell upon them, and they fled to hide themselves. ⁸So I was left alone and saw this great vision, and no strength was left in me; my radiant appearance was fearfully changed, and I retained no strength. ⁹Then I heard the sound of his words; and when I heard the sound of his words, I fell on my face in a deep sleep with my face to the ground.

Daniel is walking in meditation and prayer by the side of the Tigris. Behind him, at a respectful distance, is a group of attendants. Possibly at this precise time his mind is exercised over the fact that the Passover could not be truly kept at Jerusalem while the sanctuary site was still dominated by ruins. He pleads with God perhaps in words he

himself had recorded earlier: "How long, O Lord, before the work of restoring the sanctuary to its rightful estate shall be accomplished?" (cf. 8:13, 14). As in the previous chapter, Heaven responds to the spiritual violence of one determined to be heard on high. Like a bolt of lightning a majestic being materializes before him. The description is

repeated in the first chapter of Revelation, and there the figure is identified with Christ.

The theme of the previous chapter had been the Messiah and His work; now that Messiah appears. He has His preincarnate glory, yet is dressed as a priest, appropriately for this time of the year, the beginning of the sanctuary round of services. The fine linen particularly points to the dress of the high priest on the Day of Atonement. As chapter 9 introduced its prophetic portion by a reference to the sacred times associated with the sanctuary service, so in this instance. We are continually reminded throughout the book that the sanctuary is a microcosm of the kingdom of God and that its services mirror the plan of salvation and the history of the people of God, who frequently are designated as His temple. Daniel had prayed and fasted throughout the Passover season, but now he receives a rich spiritual feast in the revelation of and from the One who was to be not only the Sacrifice and the Priest but the Living Temple of Israel.

Chapters 7 and 8 had particularly stressed the work of antichrist. So will chapter 11. How appropriate that, between these forecasts of trial, chapters 9 and 10 should dwell upon the Good Shepherd, who is also "Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people" (12:1). The situation is similar to that of the last apocalypse of Scripture. In Revelation consoling views of Christ come between the visions concerning the tribulations affecting the church. A revelation of Him precedes the letters to the seven churches, the seven seals, the seven trumpets, and the seven plagues respectively. The lesson is clear. We can withstand life's pressures, provided Christ in His beauty and power is real to us—more real than the things of sense.

The prophet's reaction to the vision of Michael is identical with that of other saints granted a view of God. Compare the experiences of Saul (who became Paul), Moses, and Isaiah. Extreme self-love and pride are the effects of ignorance of one's Maker.⁴

10 And behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. ¹¹And he said to me, "O Daniel, man greatly beloved, give heed to the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for now I have been sent to you." While he was speaking this word to me, I stood up trembling. ¹²Then he said to me, "Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your mind to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words. ¹³The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, so I left him there with the prince of the kingdom of Persia ¹⁴and came to make you understand what is to befall your people in the latter days. For the vision is for days yet to come."

The speaker is one who has been "sent" and is not Michael (cf. 8:16). The same Gabriel who strengthened him two years before (9:22, 23) by encouraging words, and who even earlier had imparted to the prophet physical strength (8:18), now does both. Verses 13 and 21 make it clear that, as in chapter 8, Christ and Gabriel guide the prophet into truth so that the church of all ages

might know Heaven is interested in her welfare.

The picture of the prophet crouching on hands and knees shows that Daniel is not intent on making himself the hero of the situation. Michael alone is exalted, and the saint is prepared to be anything or nothing.

Concerning verse 13 it is correct to say that "no single verse in the whole of the Scripture

speaks more clearly than this upon the invisible powers which rule and influence nations."⁵ "The prince of the kingdom of Persia" is primarily Satan himself, who by his emissaries tried to turn the Medo-Persian ruler against Israel. Similarly, Michael in this chapter is spoken of as the "prince" of Israel (v. 21). It has often been pointed out that passages such as Is 14:12f., Eze 28:12f., and Dan 8:10-13 transcend the national powers to whom they originally apply. Rev 12:3, 9, similarly speaks of the earthly power, Rome, but is at pains to point out that Satan himself is the primary signification of the symbol employed.

Thus Daniel is assured that his interest in the returned exiles is only a reflection of Heaven's involvement. While Eze 4:1-6 gives the earthly side of what was happening in Palestine, here the veil is drawn back and supernatural powers are seen engaging in the conflict concerning the rebuilding of the sanctuary.

Verse 13 is interesting in yet another way. It clearly teaches the freedom of the human will to oppose God. Both Satan and Christ were moving upon the mind of the king, but neither could compel the monarch. What condescension on the part of the Almighty to allow Himself to be "withstood"! But few humans exercise a similar respect for the freedom of God-given personality. Wherever force is employed, physical or psychological, to persuade a person against his will, the "cloven hoof" (so to speak) is revealed. This passage also teaches that though God's purposes will ultimately be worked out, the *how* and *when* are often conditional upon human responses.

The expression that ends this verse probably signifies: "I was left master of the field."⁶

For the understanding of the following prophecy, verse 14 is vital. It says that this prophecy about to be unfolded, as with all other prophecies of Scripture, is concerned with the people of God and their destiny—not with other nations except as they affect believers in the one True Way.

The prophecy of chapter 11 begins with the trials of Daniel's literal people, the Jews, as they set about the reconstruction of their temple and city during the first part of the seventy weeks of years. But the prophecy continues with the experience of

Daniel's *spiritual* people, the present Israel of God, the church. Their history is traced through the 2300 years. Finally the last crisis at "the time of the end," after the termination of the 2300 years and the withdrawal of latter-day Israel from latter-day Babylon, is described (cf. Rev 14:8; 18:1-4).

The deliverance at the end of time by Michael, when the church is proscribed by antichrist, climaxes the revelation (see 12:1-3). Thus the chapter begins with the local events of local Israel but closes with global events affecting the global church, just as Mt 24 begins with the assault of literal Rome upon literal Israel but merges into the description of the attack of spiritual Rome upon spiritual Israel during the long centuries of the Middle Ages and again at the end of time.

To suggest that literal Israel and Jerusalem are intended by "your people" in 12:1 and "the glorious holy mountain" of 11:45 is to ignore the plain New Testament teaching that the kingdom has been taken from Jewry and given to the Christian nation. Wrath to the uttermost has come upon God's ancient people, though as individuals they have as much claim to the mercy of God as any Gentile (see Mt 21:33-45; 1 Pe 2:4-10; 1 Th 2:16 [see RSV fn]; Rom 11:17-24).

When dispensationalists such as Walvoord assert that the last verses of Dan 11 are to be understood literally as portraying the fate of literal Israel, we must urge them to consider lest they be found advocating a subtle kind of antinomianism. To interpret prophecy as though God's ancient promises were entirely unconditional is to encourage professed believers in choosing their own way as surely as Israel did.

The true gospel sounds at times like legalism and at other times like antinomianism, but it is neither. We are saved by faith alone, but the faith that saves is never alone. Where works of obedience are missing, we can be certain that saving faith is not present. When Israel went about to establish their own righteousness and refused to submit to Christ, who is God's righteousness incarnate, then they cut themselves off from the blessings of God. Therefore God permitted the destruction of their temple in AD 70 as a sign that their original position of privilege had been revoked. Dispensationalists should read Jer 17

very carefully, noting that the continued existence of Jerusalem as a temple city depended upon

wholehearted obedience to God that true faith and love always produce.

15 When he had spoken to me according to these words, I turned my face toward the ground and was dumb. ¹⁶And behold, one in the likeness of the sons of men touched my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke. I said to him who stood before me, "O my lord, by reason of the vision pains have come upon me, and I retain no strength. ¹⁷How can my lord's servant talk with my lord? For now no strength remains in me, and no breath is left in me."

18 Again one having the appearance of a man touched me and strengthened me. ¹⁹And he said, "O man greatly beloved, fear not, peace be with you; be strong and of good courage." And when he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, "Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me." ²⁰Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? But now I will return to fight against the prince of Persia; and when I am through with him, lo, the prince of Greece will come. ²¹But I will tell you what is inscribed in the book of truth: there is none who contends by my side against these except Michael, your prince."

Twice more in these verses we read of the strengthening of Daniel. Twice he is called "greatly beloved." Never did any mother quiet her child with greater tenderness than does the angel comfort the aged exile. Verse 19 is surely written for every member of the church of God who, like Daniel, seeks to know and to do his duty. If we will let our Lord whisper these words to us amid the storms of life, we too will be strengthened.

Verse 20 foretells the continued struggle with angels and men in Persia and then in the days of Greek supremacy. From the Greek rulers, further sorrows for Israel would issue, and at least the first half of chapter 11 describes the crisscrossing of Israel's land by the Greek Ptolemies and Seleucids. The last half of this final prophecy says, in effect, that the oppressions Israel suffered under the Greek rulers of Syria are to be repeated on a larger scale by Rome and the final antichrist.

The church militant must ever endure

"troublous times." When one enemy is overcome, another springs up. The stilling of one storm is marked by the rising of another. The devil is the whetstone of the saints. Our human nature is of such poor stuff since the Fall that only the tensions and strains of tribulation call forth the fine gold of faith and righteousness. Therefore, child of God, "be strong and of good courage," for you are "greatly beloved."

¹ Deane, p. 389.

² *Matthew Henry's Commentary*, Daniel X:1-9, par. II.

³ Leupold, p. 443.

⁴ The key items of this description of Michael are discussed in the preface to chapter 10.

⁵ Deane, p. 390.

⁶ Knox's translation. See the footnote to the RSV text.

Preface to Daniel 11

The most detailed picture in the Old Testament of future events is found in chapter 11 and its epilogue, chapter 12. Here there is repeated mention of "the time of the end" and of the international strife, civil and religious, which is to characterize that "time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation" (12:1). In these prophetic passages both the work of Christ and antichrist are focused upon with reference to their bearing on the experience of the church. Many of us may live through the events foretold, and therefore their study should be of more than usual interest.

Hermeneutical Guidelines

Many vagaries of interpretation have vitiated attempts to explain this section of Daniel. Therefore some hermeneutical guidelines may be of help. We offer six.

1. *It is characteristic of the chain prophecies of Daniel to climax in a presentation of the latter days and the establishment of the kingdom of glory* (see 2:28, 44, 45; 7:25-27; 8:14, 17, 19, 23-26; 11:40-12:4).

2. *These prophecies are given according to the principle of repetition and enlargement.*

Chapter 7 deals with the same powers as chapter 2 but enlarges the outline. Chapter 8 also deals with these empires, those still future from the standpoint of the vision. There are evident parallels between the enlarged description of the persecuting little horn in chapter 8 and the briefer picture in chapter 7. The next chain prophecy in chapters 11 and 12 begins where chapter 8 began—with a prophecy concerning Medo-Persia. It enlarges the description given in chapter 8 and then dilates on the future history of Greece, once more with greater detail than is found in any of the preceding chapters. When it concentrates upon the abomination of desolation (11:31), we find obvious parallels to the anti-God power of chapters 7 and 8. Note the similarities between the following from the three successive prophecies.

He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand for a time, two times, and half a time (7:25).

A king of bold countenance . . . shall arise. His power shall be great, and he shall cause fearful destruction . . . and destroy mighty men and the people of the saints. . . . In his own mind he shall magnify himself. Without warning he shall destroy

many; and he shall even rise up against the Prince of princes (8:23-25).

And the king shall do according to his will; he shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods. He shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished (11:36).

While chapter 7 gives five verses to the description of the antichrist, chapter 8 gives eight verses and chapter 11 more than twenty verses. This demonstrates the principle of repetition and enlargement.

3. The preceding point gives emphasis to this one. *The chain prophecies of Daniel are more concerned with the Christian era and beyond than the Old Testament age.* (This is true even in cases where an Old Testament situation is enlarged because it is typical of one in the Christian dispensation.) Even in chapter 2 this is the case. In chapter 7 the prophet quickly passes over the powers symbolized by the lion, bear, and leopard, and then dwells upon Rome, pagan and papal, which would span the Christian era. Chapter 11 introduces the Christian era by its mention of the breaking of the prince of the covenant in verse 22; and from this verse forward till the end of chapter 12, the events of the Christian age are in view, though certain events of Old Testament times that prefigured later crises for the church are incorporated.

4. *With increasing specificity and exhaustiveness there appears toward the end of Daniel a lessening of apocalyptic symbolism and an emphasis upon literal interpretation.* Dan 8:1-14 presents mainly symbolism, while the rest of the book departs from such images and provides literal explanation instead, albeit of necessity using some dispensational terms.

5. *In prophecies applying to the New Testament age, Israel now signifies the Israel of the church, and her enemies are similarly worldwide in application.* The old nomenclature may be retained, but the meaning must accord with the transition to this dispensation of the Spirit (see Rom 2:28, 29; Gal 3:28, 29; and particularly Acts 15:13-18).

6. *The opening account in Daniel of the attack upon the sanctuary of Israel by an idolatrous power from the north sets the pattern of all the prophetic revelations, particularly from chapters 8 to 12.* The kingdoms of chapters 2, 7, 8, and 11 are those kingdoms that invaded the land of the sanctuary. For prophecies applying to New Testament times, the sanctuary, or holy place, represents where God dwells in heaven above and in His church below. The great controversy between Christ and Satan is mirrored in the war over the sanctuary, as Satan can attack Christ only by attacking His truth and His people. Only earthly powers that are directly involved in this attack upon the sanctuary and all it stands for are introduced into prophecy. This simple truth eradicates many fads and foibles of those who wish to make modern-day Zionism, Turkey, Russia, or similar powers the center of the prophetic canvas.

Key Phrases

Besides the hermeneutical guidelines listed above, we offer additional clues to the exegesis of this chapter. Of primary importance is the recognition that particular phrases or concepts repeated in this section have their origin in the earlier chapters.

Note, for example, the repeated reference to "your people" (see 9:19, 24; 10:14; 11:14; 12:1). Daniel first uses it for the Old Testament people of God, the Jews, and Gabriel uses it similarly when he refers to them as Daniel's people (9:24). A verse at the heart of the introduction distinctly affirms the purpose of this final revelation. It reads: "I . . . came to make you understand what is to befall *your people* in the latter days" (10:13, 14). In harmony with this announced purpose of the final outline of events, we read the same words partway through chapter 11 and again at the commencement of chapter 12.

And the men of violence among *your own people* shall lift themselves up in order to fulfil the vision (11:14). And the breakers of *your people* shall lift themselves up in order to fulfil the vision (literal rendering of 11:14).

At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of *your people*. . . . At that time *your people* shall be delivered (12:1).

This phrase "your people" makes it certain that the theme of this last portion of Daniel is the destiny of God's professed people, and thus the themes of chapters 8 and 9 are here continued and consummated. To introduce any national power not directly involved with the church of God is to miss the mark. We will expect here something similar to what is portrayed in the last book of Scripture—a description of the final testing and tribulation of the saints (cf. Rev 13:13-18).

Other phrases often repeated in this chapter are "the king of the north" and "the king of the south." Jeremiah had described Babylon as Israel's northern enemy, and Ezekiel also pictured enemies from the north invading the land of God's people (Jer 1:13-15; 4:6; Eze 38:6, 15). *North* means "north of Palestine," and similarly *south* means "south of Palestine." The first primarily meant Syria, which replaced Babylon geographically and experientially. The second meant Egypt. So long as we are in Old Testament times, in the days of the old covenant when literal Israel was God's people, such terms must be related geographically to points of the compass radiating from a Palestinian center.

In new-covenant times, the meaning of these terms will cease to be geographical, inasmuch as God's Israel is now scattered over the whole earth. We shall find as the latter-day "king of the north" some such power as spiritual Babylon, and we shall look for a spiritual Egypt that denies it knows Yahweh. Thus the use of these terms, as with the use of "your people," reminds us again that the church is at the heart of all prophecy and all else is present because of relationship to it for good or ill.

Yet another phrase needs consideration: "according to his will." (Compare 4:35; 8:4 [KJV]; 11:3, 16, 36. And the identical concept, though different wording, is found in 5:19.)

When we collate and study these passages, we find a phrase expressive of tremendous power and authority. It is first used of God, and appropriately so, but all later usages are in connection with powers trying to take the place of the Almighty. The last employment of these words applies to a foe whom all exegetes acknowledge as antichrist. In between these first and last usages we have it employed concerning *types* of antichrist—those

kings and nations who presumed to legislate religious behavior, or who arrogated to themselves the prerogatives of Deity (see 5:19 for a description of the tyrannous conduct of Nebuchadnezzar).

In 8:4 the phrase is used of Medo-Persia, which power in the days of Esther tried to wipe out the people of God. In 11:13 it is used of Alexander, one who claimed divine rights and sought worship of himself. In 11:16 it applies to the king of the north as he envelops the holy land, and the final reference of verse 36 is in the prelude to the last attack by antichrist on the church, the "glorious holy mountain" (cf. Ex 3:5; Joel 3:17, 21; 2:32; Is 4:3, 4).

Dan 11:16 is reminiscent of the opening passage of the Book of Daniel. Syria and Rome particularly duplicated the work and attitude of Babylon, the original king of the north, toward the sanctuary and its worshiping host. In this verse we have Antiochus III, who wrenched Palestine from the comparatively peaceful control of the Ptolemies and paved the way for the devastations of his son Antiochus Epiphanes. These Syrian kings were both tributary to Rome and operating within the very shadow of that rising titan. Their relationship (Epiphanes' in particular) with the Jews foreshadowed the future actions of Rome.

Thus the phrase under consideration points to tremendous power and blasphemous claims of authority. It usually betokens malevolence toward the people of God, and a magnifying of itself against or in the place of Deity. This malevolence is usually demonstrated by attacks on the sanctuary and those who worship there. Our earlier suggestions regarding the sphere of prophecy find further confirmation in this strand of additional evidence. To happen upon this phrase as we study the chapter should act like a red light, preparing us for an outstanding crisis, one that threatens to exterminate the saints. It should also act as a touchstone for all proffered interpretations.

The following set of comparisons illustrates the work of those powers styled as doing according to their own will. Particularly one should consider the parallelism between the wording in 8:9-25 and 11:14-45, as these rightly understood make such demands by way of consistency of exegesis that truth is largely safeguarded.

Daniel 8

MEDO-PERSIA, the ram vs. 3, 20

GRECIA, the he-goat vs. 5, 21
 was strong v. 8
 waxed very great v. 8

great horn broken v. 8
 toward four winds of
 heaven v. 8

ROME (and SYRIA),
 the little horn v. 9

toward glorious land v. 9
 prince of the host v. 11

PAPAL ROME

offering taken away v. 11
 sanctuary cast down v. 11
 cast down truth to
 ground v. 12
 practiced and prospered v. 12
 transgression of
 desolation v. 13
 time of the end v. 17

transgressors come to
 full measure v. 23
 end of indignation v. 19
 end at time appointed v. 19
 to become mighty but not
 by own power v. 24
 destroy wonderfully v. 24
 destroy the holy people v. 24

cause craft to prosper v. 25

magnify himself v. 25

Daniel 11

PERSIA, kings v. 2

GRECIA v. 3; cf. v. 2
 a mighty king v. 3
 ruled with great
 dominion v. 3
 kingdom broken v. 4
 toward four winds of
 heaven v. 4

ROME (and SYRIA),
 robbers of thy people v. 14
 a contemptible [despised,
 little] person v. 21
 a small people v. 23
 in glorious land v. 16
 prince of the covenant v. 22

PAPAL ROME

offering taken away v. 31
 sanctuary profaned v. 31
 shall work deceitfully v. 23

 shall prosper v. 36
 abomination that maketh
 desolate v. 31
 how long (12:7)
 time of the end vs. 35, 40
 (12:4, 9)
 wicked shall do wickedly (12:10)

indignation accomplished v. 36
 end at time appointed vs. 27, 35
 shall become strong with
 a small people v. 23
 great fury to destroy v. 44
 fall by sword and flame v. 33

shall corrupt by
 flatteries v. 32
 magnify himself vs. 36, 37
 exalt v. 14

by peace destroy many v. 25

against Prince of princes v. 25

to be broken without hand v. 25

THE VISION IS TRUE v. 26
 shut up the vision v. 26
 vision for many days v. 26
 none understood it v. 27

many cleave to them with
 flatteries v. 34
 come in . . . by
 flatteries v. 21
 work deceitfully v. 23
 Prince of the covenant v. 22
 against God of gods v. 36
 come to his end, with
 none to help him v. 45

THE VISION IS TRUE (10:1)
 shut up the words (12:4, 9)
 vision for many days (10:14, 1)
 Daniel then understood it (10:1)

"The Breakers" of Daniel's People

One particular phrase is given prominence in this closing prophecy. It occurs at a point that influences our interpretation of the remainder of the book. The phrase is translated in the KJV "the robbers of thy people" and in the RSV "the men of violence among your own people" (11:14). This phrase introduces the parallels concerning Rome listed immediately above. We wish to inquire as to the legitimacy of this usage.

The phrase is usually interpreted as applying to a violent Jewish faction that rebelled against Egyptian control in Palestine. This interpretation understands the expression "breakers of thy people" (the literal rendering) as a subjective reference—that is, breakers, or violent ones, "from among thy people." Most commentators have followed this subjective application, despite its result in a nebulous supposed fulfillment, which in no wise matches the solemn emphasis of the text.

Montgomery confesses, "The historical ref. is most obscure," and Zöckler comments, "It is not to be denied that at any rate this prophetic text of the section and the corresponding historical events." Keil says of the usual application, "[It] was not of such a kind as to be capable of being regarded as a fulfilling of the 'exalting themselves' of . . . ['the sons of the breakers'], ver. 14." Thomson says, "Commentators of all varieties have assumed that these are Jews. . . . But the oppressors of the people do not necessarily belong

to it."¹ Thomson takes the objective meaning of the phrase as the correct one, that the oppressors, or breakers, are certain ones outside Jewry but opposing that people. Tregelles, Uriah Smith, Taylor G. Bunch, and E. R. Thiele do likewise. We agree.

What has not been noticed is the fact that the root term here for "breakers," "the men of violence," or "robbers" is found again in 12:7 where the "shattering of the power of the holy people" is once more mentioned. In this latter context it is made clear that the power referred to is identical with that of 7:25, for it quotes the "time, two times, and half a time" found there. Therefore the group intended in 11:14 is the same people described throughout the book as antagonistic to Israel.

Let us summarize the use in Daniel made of the concept of "breaking" as it applies to the opponents of the Jews, particularly the fourth kingdom.

And there shall be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron, because iron *breaks* to pieces and *shatters* all things; and like iron which *crushes*, it shall *break* and *crush* all these (2:40).

A fourth beast, terrible and dreadful and exceedingly strong; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and *broke* in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet.

. . . which devoured and *broke* in pieces . . .
 . . . a fourth kingdom on earth, which shall be different from all the kingdoms, and it shall devour

the whole earth, and trample it down, and *break* it to pieces (7:7, 19, 23).

Chapter 8 does not use the Hebrew word for "break," but it uses a synonym meaning "to destroy by treading underfoot"—the word translated *trample*. This term is ever associated with an oppressor or destroyer. See Is 16:4, which uses all three terms synonymously.

It grew great, even to the host of heaven; and some of the host of the stars it cast down to the ground, and *trampled* upon them.

"For how long is the vision concerning the . . . giving over of the sanctuary and host to be trampled under foot?" (8:10, 13).

Thus the concept of "breaking" is used in both the Aramaic and Hebrew portions of Daniel for the fourth kingdom of chapters 2 and 7, and in chapters 11 and 12 for the final power devastating the saints. Dan 12:7 is obviously tied to the little horn of 7:25. Synonyms such as "trample," "destroy," are linked with the little horn of chapter 8 and the prince of 9:26. Thus the cumulative evidence is very strong indeed that the "breakers" of 11:14 are synonymous with the fourth kingdom.

Says Taylor G. Bunch on this passage in 11:14:

Rome is here designated as "the robbers" or "breakers" of "thy people." Rome in both its Pagan and Papal forms has robbed the people of God more than all other nations combined. Pagan Rome robbed God's chosen people of their throne and kingdom. They took away their liberties and destroyed their city and temple, robbing the latter of its gold and silver and precious treasure. They also stood up against the "Prince of princes" and by order of a Roman governor nailed Him to the cross. When the Roman Armies invaded Britain, the Scottish chieftain Galacus said: "These ravagers of the world, after all the earth has been too narrow for their ambition, have ransacked the sea also. If their enemy be rich, they are covetous; if poor, they are ambitious. The East cannot satiate them—no more can the West. To plunder, to murder, to rob, is their delight. Violence they call dominion; and wherever they can make a dreary solitude they call it peace."

For more than a millennium Papal Rome robbed

the Christian church of their Mediator and Priest by the substitution of a false system in the church-temple which is the court of the heavenly sanctuary. The Papacy took away the heavenly sanctuary with its daily or continual services, and robbed the church of the Scriptures, the law, the Sabbath, and the way of salvation. This great antichristian power robbed the church of its gospel light and plunged the world into the Dark Ages. It put to death and thus took away the lives of from fifty to one hundred millions of the saints of the Most High.

What more appropriate language could be used to describe Rome in both its phases than "the robbers of thy people." Fenton renders it: "And the *fierce fellows* of your people will rise up to accomplish this vision." In Deut. 28:49-57 Rome is described as "a nation of *fierce countenance*," and in Dan. 8:23 "a king of *fierce countenance*." The divine prediction is, "But they shall fall," and this is in harmony with all the other predictions of Rome in the book of Daniel. See 2:44, 45; 7:11, 12, 26, 27; 8:25; 11:45.²

This position has the weight of evidence on its side. All commentators are agreed that at the time spoken of in Dan 11:14 Rome became prominent on the world scene. It is impossible to read any exposition of this and the surrounding verses without finding reference to the new Titan. When Antiochus III of Syria and Philip of Macedon planned to seize all Egyptian territory outside Egypt itself, it was the Romans who, as the guardians of the young Ptolemy, intervened. Antiochus Magnus was successful for a time and seemed strong enough to be left alone, particularly as an ally of Hannibal. But in 191 BC Rome defeated Antiochus on the seas, in Greece, and finally at Magnesia. Henceforward Antiochus was to pay a yearly tribute to the Senate of Rome.

From the time brought to view in verse 14, Palestine was under the control of either Syria or Rome. Inasmuch as Syria submitted to terms dictated by Rome (the prince who was to become Antiochus Epiphanes was a hostage in Italy), Palestine can be viewed as under the Roman shadow from the time of the battle of Magnesia. Within a little over twenty years the strength of Macedonian, Greek, Egyptian, and Syrian independence was broken forever. Hereafter in the prophecy the expression "king of the north" does not reappear till "the time of the end" of verse 40.

Rome has become "the king of the north," although the behavior of the Syrian kings, Antiochus III and IV, is first presented because it was typical of Rome's behavior. With the genius that only inspiration can confer, Daniel selects from the reigns of the two Syrian kings who closely affected the Jews those events that were in principle duplicated on a much vaster scale by Rome—the nation that above all others was "the breaker" of Israel.

It is interesting to note that Daniel's book begins with the account of a "breaker" from the north—one who destroyed the city and sanctuary and carried "the saints" captive. This theme reoccurs again and again throughout the book till in the closing prophecy the king of the north once more invades the sacred land and finally attacks the "glorious holy mountain," only to be brought to his end with none to help him. The breaker himself is broken at last (see 2:44, 45; 8:25, cf. 11:45). The description of the end of the king of the north is modeled on Isaiah's description of the fall of the first king of the north—Babylon (cf. Dan 11:4, 5 with Is 47:1, 11-15). No wonder the closing book of the New Testament, written at a time when the threat of martyrdom from the Roman Empire was an ever-present menace, should use "Babylon" as the title for the oppressor of the church (see Jer 50:23, which refers to Babylon as "the hammer of the whole earth," and cf. 2 Ki 25:4 and Jer 39:2).

With its reference to the "breakers" who would exalt themselves "to fulfil the vision," 11:14 parallels 9:26, which refers to "the people of the prince that shall come" (KJV). Both statements look back to what is preeminently called "the vision" in the Book of Daniel, namely that of 8:1-14. (Of the twenty-two times the word *vision* occurs, at least three quarters of the references are referring to "the vision" of chapter 8.) That vision had told of a desolating prince who would ravage the people of the sanctuary, and both chapters 9 and 11 point to the fulfillment. Concerning this power the original vision stated, "By no human hand, he shall be broken." The ninth chapter says that the desolating prince shall experience the pouring out of the decreed wrath of God. And the present verse asserts, "But they

shall fail." (The word translated "fail" would be better translated "fall." See verses 33, 34, 35, where the same word occurs and is translated "fall" in the RSV. Compare also 2:44, 45 and 7:11, 26.)

By its language 11:14 is indissolubly linked with the descriptions earlier given of the fourth kingdom. Only of the latter power is it ever declared in Daniel that they would seek to "break" the people of God. Only this power is described as "exalting" itself. And only this power is so central to the prophecies of Daniel that its arrival can be said to "fulfil the vision."

Thus when 11:14 is closely analyzed and compared with other passages, it becomes apparent that to use Rome as the heading for verse 14ff. in this chapter is entirely appropriate. Even the immediately following verses, which chiefly describe the doings of Antiochus III and IV, tell of a world where Rome has become supreme. The actions of the Syrian king are chronicled for the purpose of encouraging the oppressed worshipers (at the time of the Maccabees) and the persecuted millions during the Middle Ages who experienced similar events on a magnified scale. This truth that both chapters 8 and 11 stress the days of the rising Roman Empire when a Syrian megalomaniac menaced the people of God and His sanctuary and that both chapters continue by merging or superimposing the similar activities of both pagan and papal Rome—this alone can unlock the mysteries of these prophecies of the seer of Babylon. The following comments are worthy of close consideration:

The portion [of Dan 11] of which the meaning has been disputed . . . extends from verse 20 to the close of the chapter. It consists of four parts, each distinct in itself and which occupy respectively eleven, five, four, and six verses. . . .

To sum up the whole, the first of the three disputed portions has had a clear fulfillment in Antiochus. . . . The third portion of the text, 11:36-45, has never been fulfilled in Antiochus, but answers clearly to several other passages that refer expressly to the predicted Antichrist.

The middle portion has a more doubtful character. The Fathers, and all the earlier expositors as Luther and Mede, while they believe that the

Wilful King is the Antichrist of the New Testament, still apply these verses to the Syrian oppressor.

Newton, and most other later commentators, while they see a clear prediction of Antiochus in the passage 11:20-30, refer the verses that follow to the Roman desolations. The history in Maccabees, and the prophecy of our Lord, lend an equal support to these opposite interpretations.

It seems a conclusion almost inevitable, that these verses, like the emblem of the Little Horn, have in truth a double reference, and that in them the real transition occurs from Antiochus to the Roman power, and its anti-Christian warfare against the Church of God. . . .

That many discursive prophecies have a double sense, must be plain to every thoughtful and judicious reader. Some event, nearer in time, and lower in dignity, is often made the earnest and vehicle of a higher truth. The Spirit of God thus leads onward the thoughts of His people, more gently, to the distant wonders of His Providence. His mercies and judgments, like the larva of the insect, seem commonly to pass through a dim and imperfect stage, before they appear full grown, in their exact form and perfect brightness.³

As the eleventh and twelfth chapters of Daniel expand the prophecy of chapter eight, we should expect to find that the passages dealing with the antichrist power in these last two chapters would parallel the passages in the chapter they are illuminating. That being the case, we find that many of the differences in interpretation have not been contradictions, but merely the different applications of this apotelesmatic prophecy. It will depend entirely upon our focal point as to whether we see antichrist as Antiochus Epiphanes, pagan Rome, or papal Rome in either of its two phases. Once again, only the consummative manifestation of the antichrist will fill out the details of this apotelesmatic prophecy.⁴

¹ See Montgomery, p. 438; Zöckler, p. 244; Keil, p. 449; Thomson, p. 311.

² Bunch, p. 170.

³ T. R. Birks, *First Elements of Sacred Prophecy*, pp. 225, 230.

⁴ R. Way, E. Gillet, B. Brinsmead, "The Consummation" (unpublished MS), p. 24.

Commentary on Daniel 11

1 And as for me, in the first year of Darius the Mede, I stood up to confirm and strengthen him.

2 "And now I will show you the truth. Behold, three more kings shall arise in Persia; and a fourth shall be far richer than all of them; and when he has become strong through his riches, he shall stir up all against the kingdom of Greece."

Though commentators differ in their enumeration of these kings, some including a temporary imposter, and others not, the identity of the fourth is beyond question. Xerxes, whose riches were proverbial, was the one who stirred up his realm against Greece.

Probably the best listing of the kings spoken of is as follows: Cambyses II (529-522 BC); the false Smerdis (Gaumata or Bardiya, 522 BC); Darius I (522-486 BC); Xerxes I (486-465 BC).

Most of Xerxes' successors had little to do directly with Jerusalem and the sanctuary. With Artaxerxes Longimanus, Xerxes' successor, Persia's part in restoring the sanctuary was complete, and prophecy is no longer concerned with that nation. Xerxes was overthrown at Salamis by the unexpected strength and skill of the hitherto despised Greeks, and henceforth Persia is viewed as politically defunct. Gabriel passes immediately to the Greece of Alexander, ignoring a century and a half of history. Haskell comments:

The history of the Persian empire, until it passed its zenith, is the history of the decrees; and when that nation ceased to help forward the people upon whom God was still bestowing light, it is lost sight of by the divine historian.¹

The verses that follow still focus on the fortunes of Israel and the sanctuary. We will see Israel as the football of the nations, and Palestine, the land of the temple, as "that indigestible little country" bringing trouble to its oppressors as well as being itself continually on the receiving end. This concentration on the covenant people harmonizes with the genius of inspired prophecy that ignores all nations other than those directly affecting the people of God.

Josephus tells that Alexander the Great went from Tyre to Jerusalem en route to Egypt and was shown the Book of Daniel, particularly the prophecy of 8:21. According to Josephus the result was that Alexander granted special favors to the Jews not only at Jerusalem but in other lands.² It is

impossible to authenticate or disprove this account, but it is highly probable that Alexander, with his religious interests, would indeed have visited the temple, and it is just as probable that leaders of the Jews would have been quick to show him the inspired predictions that concerned him.

Those historians who reject Josephus do so on two grounds—errors of detail and the supposed late date of the writing of Daniel. Neither ground is sufficient to demonstrate that the account is inaccurate. Its historicity would contribute to the significance of the following verse:

3⁴ "Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion and do according to his will. ⁴And when he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not to his posterity, nor according to the dominion with which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be plucked up and go to others besides these."

History is here masterfully sketched. Alexander was in many ways a pioneer, paving the way for the Christian church, despite his own delusions of grandeur and supposed relationships with the gods. "He lifted the civilized world out of one groove and set it in another; he started a new epoch; nothing could again be as it had been."³

The world into which Christ was born was essentially Greek, though Roman banners waved over its cities. The very language of the New Testament was born as a result of the dissipating of local barriers by Alexander.

The prophecy indicates the dramatic suddenness of the change that came over the empire of Alexander with his unexpected death at a time of unparalleled success.

In the spring of 323 before Christ the whole order of things from the Adriatic away to the mountains of Central Asia and the dusty plains of the Panjab rested

upon a single will, a single brain, nurtured in Hellenic thought. Then the hand of God, as if trying some fantastic experiment, plucked this man away. Who could predict for a moment what the result would be?⁴

Gabriel stressed that the divisions of the Greek Empire would never equal Alexander's kingdom in strength (see also 8:22). Some who have seen the impossibility of making successive empires out of the Medes and the Persians have wished to make the fourth beast the kingdoms of the Diadochi as the only way to retain a second-century authorship for Daniel. But this statement, and that of 8:22, make it impossible so to do. The fourth beast of Dan 7 is obviously much stronger than all preceding, whereas if it represented the Diadochi it should have been represented as much weaker. Only Rome can comply with the prophetic specifications.

5 "Then the king of the south shall be strong, but one of his princes shall be stronger than he and his dominion shall be a great dominion. ⁶After some years they shall make an alliance, and the daughter of the king of the south shall come to the king of the north to make peace; but she shall not retain the strength of her arm, and he and his offspring shall not endure; but she shall be given up, and her attendants, her child, and he who got possession of her."

7 "In those times a branch from her roots shall arise in his place; he shall come against the army and enter the fortress of the king of the north, and he

shall deal with them and shall prevail. ⁸He shall also carry off to Egypt their gods with their molten images and with their precious vessels of silver and of gold; and for some years he shall refrain from attacking the king of the north. ⁹Then the latter shall come into the realm of the king of the south but shall return into his own land."

From here on the prophecy concerns but two of the four divisions of Alexander's empire. The Egyptian Ptolemies and the Syrian Seleucids are now the chief powers influencing the destiny of Israel. Attacks on Palestine had always come from either the north or the south, for to the west is the Mediterranean, and to the east the desert of Arabia. Israel's land was at the crossroads of the world. Whoever controlled that strategic area could bid for all the rest.

For about a century the Ptolemies controlled Palestine, and these early verses depict their dominance and the efforts of the Seleucids to replace them. Verse 5 speaks of Ptolemy I (305-285 BC) and another of Alexander's generals, Seleucus I (312-280 BC), originally sheltered by Ptolemy, but ultimately surpassing him. By the

time of his death, Seleucus I possessed all of Alexander's empire except Egypt and Palestine.

Verse 6 refers to Ptolemy II (285-226 BC), who sought to establish happier relationships with Syria by giving Berenice his daughter in marriage with a splendid dowry. Ultimately Laodice, the prior wife of Antiochus II (261-247 BC), supplanted Berenice, and poisoned Antiochus. Ptolemy II died about the same time.

The brother of Berenice became Ptolemy III (246-221 BC), and he sought to avenge his sister by invading Syria. He was successful, but possibly because of trouble in Egypt was unable to follow up his initial victories. The last verse tells of a counterblow by Seleucus, which also was not prosecuted to the full.

10 "His sons shall wage war and assemble a multitude of great forces, which shall come on and overflow and pass through, and again shall carry the war as far as his fortress. ¹¹Then the king of the south, moved with anger, shall come out and fight with the king of the north; and he shall raise a great multitude, but it shall be given into his hand. ¹²And when the multitude is taken, his heart shall be exalted, and he shall cast down tens of thousands, but he shall not prevail."

Seleucus III had but a brief reign and was succeeded by Antiochus III, the Great. He advanced toward Palestine, stirring Ptolemy IV into activity. In 217 BC at Raphia, the army of Antiochus was defeated, but the vacillating Ptolemy did not pursue his victory. Instead he gave himself up to licentiousness. After making peace with Syria, he entered Jerusalem in triumph and endeavored to force his way into the holy of holies of the sanctuary, only to be resisted by the

Jews. Still angry by the time of his return to Egypt, he put to death thousands of Jews residing at Alexandria.

We would draw particular attention to the metaphor of "overflow" in verse 10. We have met it already in 9:26 and will find it again in verses 22, 26, and 40 of this chapter. It is a figure for victorious advance, and to most Jews was reminiscent of invasions from the great river Euphrates (see Is 8:7, 8). The same figure is

present in the last apocalypse (see Rev 12:15; 17:15; 16:12). The "drying up" of flooding

waters is a symbolic expression for the sudden overthrow of invaders.

13 "For the king of the north shall again raise a multitude, greater than the former; and after some years he shall come on with a great army and abundant supplies."

During his twelve years of peace with Egypt, Antiochus warred against the Parthians and other nations to the north and east. From India he secured a large supply of elephants for his next war with Egypt. Scholars such as R. D. Wilson have pointed out that this prophecy of chapter 11 never refers to elephants, though had it been written in

the second century BC almost certainly they would have been mentioned, as they were frequently employed in these wars (cf. the reference to chariots in 11:40).

The accession of the boy king Ptolemy V (203-181 BC) was a temptation for Antiochus to which he gladly responded, and he advanced on Egypt.

14 "In those times many shall rise against the king of the south; and the men of violence among your own people shall lift themselves up in order to fulfil the vision; but they shall fail."

In our preface to this chapter we have dwelled upon the significance of the phrase "the men of violence among your own people." The RSV and many other translations are highly interpretive, and without conclusive support from the Hebrew. Many suggest that "the breakers of thy people" is a more accurate rendering. Thomson suggests "the oppressors of thy people," and Tregelles likewise. The association of this term with the well-known reference—"the vision"—indicates its importance and its relationship to that prophecy of Daniel preeminently called "the vision," namely chapter 8. The "breakers" or "oppressors" arise to fulfill that vision. Rome, the climax of chapter 8, was the greatest persecuting power the world has ever known, and by it the Jews were "broken" as no other power has ever broken them. Similarly, in the Christian era the people of God have experienced more oppression from this source than any other, particularly when we include as part of the prophetic intent the medieval union of church and state that perpetuated the cruelty of pagan Rome. The reference to exalting

themselves (KJV; RSV has "lift themselves up") also coheres with similar descriptions of the fourth kingdom.

It is a fact of history that Rome became prominent in world affairs at the very time this verse discusses. In the year 200 BC the Romans, as the guardians of the young Ptolemy, declared war against Philip V of Macedon, who had joined Antiochus, and commanded the latter to make peace with Egypt.

The expression "but they shall fail" is meant as one of consolation. Elsewhere the RSV translates the original term for the last word as "fall," and this would be more appropriate here. It is an anticipation of 11:45. Having introduced the Roman power as "the breakers," in allusion to 2:40; 7:19, 23; 8:10, 13, 25; 9:26, the angel of prophecy hastens to add that this enemy shall not forever endure. Thus this expression of their fate parallels 2:45; 7:11, 26; 8:25; 9:27; 11:45, all of which foretell the end of this, the greatest of aggressors.

It is important that we observe the connection

between this introduction of Rome and the following description of the Syrian oppression in Palestine. The following verses, at least from 15 through 35, chiefly center upon the most tragic experience of the Jews between the time of Jerusalem's destruction in 586 BC by the Babylonians and the repetition of that tragedy in AD 70 by the Romans. The Seleucids, particularly Epiphanes, became a new Babylon in their hatred of the Jews. They are appropriately called "the king of the north," for this term was familiar to the Jews as applicable to Babylon (see Jer 1:13, 14; 4:6; 46:20). The earlier verses of this chapter, which discuss the Egyptian influence in Palestine, encompass a comparatively peaceful era (with rare exceptions, as under Ptolemy IV), but from verse 15 until the end of the chapter, Palestine is represented as being under repeated attack and wanton aggression.

In verse 40, after a long silence, the expression "king of the north" is again introduced, and he is seen doing exactly what the earlier kings of the north had done, flooding over "the glorious land" to ravage it. Almost all exegetes admit that this passage can hardly be made to fit the days of Antiochus Epiphanes. The whole picture is now deeper and broader, and although old-covenant terminology is present, many interpreters have recognized that it is the last days of our own dispensation that are being pictured; therefore, terms such as "glorious land" will here require a meaning transcending the earlier literal significance of Palestine. What we wish to emphasize, however, is that after the mention of Rome, the breakers of Daniel's people, the ensuing allusion to "the king of the north" is the last time the title is used until near the end of the chapter. Hereafter the

familiar title is replaced by "he," in the style of the repeated use of the same pronoun in the prophecy of the antichrist in chapter 8.

In summary, verse 14 at the appropriate point in history introduces the same calamitous attacker that earlier chapters foretold—the power above all others that was to be the devastator ("desolator") of God's people. The verses which follow particularize the exploits of the Syrians, whose hatred for and violence against Israel are now used typically for the power already overshadowing Syria (and to some extent controlling it, for the Syrian kings were permitted freedom of action only on the condition of paying huge sums to Rome).

Thus, in verse 15, having the expression "king of the north" linked to the introduction of "the breakers," the angel no longer uses either term but instead employs the third personal pronoun so common in the descriptions of antichrist in chapters 7 and 8. Thereby we are told as clearly as might be expected that all that now follows, while fulfilled typically in Syria (the new Babylon from the north), applies in principle to the "Babylon" to which the New Testament so frequently makes reference in its forecasts of persecution.

As in a photograph with a double exposure, we will see two figures present, one more shadowy than the other. The first verses will make the typical antichrist clearer, and only in vague outline will we discern the presence of the antitype, but in the later verses the situation is reversed as one figure merges into the other. The meeting place, where one is almost precisely superimposed upon the other, is the central passage concerning the anger against the holy covenant and the sanctuary (see vs. 30-35).

15 "Then the king of the north shall come and throw up siege-works, and take a well-fortified city. And the forces of the south shall not stand, or even his picked troops, for there shall be no strength to stand."

This verse and the following are duplicated in verses 40 and 41. What is here described is typical of the subsequent work of one greater than Syria.

Verse 15 describes Syria's victory over the Egyptian forces at Paneas. This was the end of Egyptian power in Palestine. Henceforth the land

is "trodden under foot" by either Syria or Rome until the nation is no more. E. R. Bevan wrote concerning the battle at Paneas, "The battle is the landmark denoting the final and definite substitution of Seleucid for Ptolemaic rule in Palestine."⁵

Most commentators see Sidon as "the well-fortified city." There Scopas, the Egyptian leader, had retreated after his defeat at Paneas. Gaza fell about the same time.

16 "But he who comes against him shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him; and he shall stand in the glorious land, and all of it shall be in his power."

This verse is an excellent summary of the aggressive and victorious career of the king of the north in Palestine. The expression "according to his own will" is another link with the later section of the chapter, which fits New Testament times.

From verse 36 onward we have the last "king of the north," spiritual Babylon, doing according to its own will, even decimating those who dwell in the "glorious land" of God's church.

17 "He shall set his face to come with the strength of his whole kingdom, and he shall bring terms of peace and perform them. He shall give him the daughter of women to destroy the kingdom; but it shall not stand or be to his advantage. 18 Afterward he shall turn his face to the coastlands, and shall take many of them; but a commander shall put an end to his insolence; indeed he shall turn his insolence back upon him. 19 Then he shall turn his face back toward the fortresses of his own land; but he shall stumble and fall, and shall not be found."

20 "Then shall arise in his place one who shall send an exactor of tribute through the glory of the kingdom; but within a few days he shall be broken, neither in anger nor in battle."

The Syrian king betrothed Cleopatra, his daughter, to the young Egyptian monarch in the hope that she would help him to destroy Egypt, but his purpose was frustrated by her allegiance to her husband. Endeavoring to repeat some of the exploits of Alexander the Great, Antiochus Magnus took some of the coastlands of the Mediterranean and moved into Greece. Rome stopped him at Thermopylae (191 BC) and then ultimately at Magnesia in 190 BC. Verse 18 describes the Roman commander who humiliated Antiochus. Verse 20 tells of the efforts of Syria to

raise the taxes now demanded by the Roman Senate. 2 Maccabees 3:1-40 speaks of an attempt to rob the temple at Jerusalem to help meet the Roman indemnity. The "exactor" was Heliodorus, sent by the Syrian king to empty the "sacred" purse of the Jews.

The emphasis in these verses is not only upon the stratagems of the king of the north and his apparent widespread conquests but upon the ultimate denouement of failure and a "fall" from which recovery was impossible. In 8:25 we have a similar picture of the antichrist who by cunning

would extend his power, only to be suddenly broken by divine intervention. The last verses of the present chapter tell of the same succession of

magnificent conquest climaxing in ultimate defeat.

21¹⁴ "In his place shall arise a contemptible person to whom royal majesty has not been given; he shall come in without warning and obtain the kingdom by flatteries. 22 Armies shall be utterly swept away before him and broken, and the prince of the covenant also. 23 And from the time that an alliance is made with him he shall act deceitfully; and he shall become strong with a small people. 24 Without warning he shall come into the richest parts of the province; and he shall do what neither his fathers nor his fathers' fathers have done, scattering among them plunder, spoil, and goods. He shall devise plans against strongholds, but only for a time."

From this verse onward Jerome, Chrysostom, and a host of medieval, Reformation, and modern expositors see Antiochus Epiphanes as a type of antichrist. We quote Jerome's comments on these verses as representative:

Hitherto the order of history is followed, and between Porphyry and ourselves there is no controversy. Other things which follow to the end of the book he interprets as applying to Antiochus who was surnamed Epiphanes, the brother of Seleucus, son of Antiochus the Great, who reigned in Syria eleven years after Seleucus and obtained Judaea, under whom there was a persecution of the law of God, and the Maccabean wars are said to have taken place. We however think that all these things are prophesied concerning Antichrist who will come at the last time.

And since to this there might seem to be opposed the fact that the prophetic word leaves such things in the middle, from Seleucus to the end of the world, it may be replied that in earlier history where it was speaking about the kings of Persia, it put only four kings after Cyrus the Persian, and, passing over many intervening events, suddenly came to Alexander the Macedonian king. This is the custom of the Sacred Scripture, not to relate everything but to explain those things which seem to be most important. And since there are many things which we must later read and expound, which do fit the person of Antiochus, he should be regarded as a type of the Antichrist, and those things which have partly

applied to him as being completely fulfilled in the Antichrist. And this is the custom of the Sacred Scripture. It sets forth the truth of the future in types, as, for example, that which is said concerning the Lord as Saviour in the 71st Psalm [72] which is entitled, "by Solomon."

All the things which are said by him cannot apply to Solomon: for neither will he remain *with the sun and before the moon for generation and generation* (Ps. 71): nor did he rule from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth, nor did all people serve him, nor has his name remained before the sun nor are all the tribes of the earth blessed in him nor have all people magnified him. In part therefore and as though in the shade and image of the truth they are set forth concerning Solomon, that they may be more perfectly fulfilled in the Divine Saviour.

Therefore just as the Saviour has both Solomon and other saints as the type of His advent, so also must we believe that Antichrist has as a true type of himself, the very bad King Antiochus, who persecuted the saints and violated the temple."

The parallel between this passage and what follows with the descriptions of the "little horn" is obvious. Here too is one, originally little, who by great cunning conquers territories. The stress on shrewdness in 7:8 and 8:25 is matched by the references to "flatteries," "deceitfully," "without warning," in the present description.

In support of the position espoused by Jerome and others it should be pointed out that the word

here translated "contemptible" is not a common word in the Hebrew text, but it is applied twice to the Messiah in Is 53:3. Thus the present passage is suggesting that Antiochus, as a type of antichrist, was in reality what Christ seemed to be to many of His nation. A disproportionate amount of attention is given to this king in comparison with all the others so far mentioned. In fact, it is obvious that it is for the sake of the present situation (21-35) that the earlier events had been depicted. Verses 1-20 provide the setting for this climactic description of opposition to the kingdom of God.

Verses 21-24 are a summary of the rapid rise to success of the Syrian king, 25-27 give an illustration of his treacherous dealings, 28-35 discuss his most heinous behavior as he warred against Israel and her sanctuary. All three sections are pertinent as a revelation of Rome also—the power that began as a small despised race but by dint of diplomacy, treaties, and stratagems swept to leadership of the world, and then broke Israel, her Messiah, and her temple.

Descriptions of Antiochus Epiphanes vary greatly, but we append a few that indicate his enigmatic quality. He seemed as one who was guided and energized by a spirit more vile and ingenious than his own.

... one of the most extraordinary characters exhibited on the pages of history. He was both avaricious and prodigal, excessive in his indulgences and prone to violent passions, a compound of the veriest folly and weakness in some respects, and of great cunning and dexterity in some others, especially in regard to flattery. At one period of his reign, there was a prospect of his becoming quite powerful. But reverses came upon him, and he died at last nearly as his father had done before him, and on the like occasion. Indeed his extravagances and follies and cruelty were so great, that his contemporaries gave him the nickname of "epimanes" (madman), instead of the title which he assumed, viz., "epiphanes" (illustrious).⁷

To start with, he was a man of a very ardent imagination. ... Secondly, the stimulus which was given him by his imagination was very rapidly translated into act, for he was a man of vehement impulse and high spirits. ... This too made him, for all his *bonhomie*, for all his lavish open-handed

liberality, fundamentally a tyrant. ... But with all his waywardness and intemperance, Antiochus had a strong grasp of affairs. ... Lastly, I think it is not inconsistent with anything we have said of Antiochus to suppose that there was really something not absolutely sound in his mental constitution, such an impalpable vein of insanity as can go with brilliant powers and extraordinary astuteness in dealing.⁸

The next quotation is most significant. At several points it indicates how Antiochus Epiphanes reflected the attitudes of Rome, the power that held him hostage so long, and to which he remained financially tributary.

Antiochus is indeed "a man of riddles" (8:23), possessing "the fascination of enigma." ... A Graeco-Roman Levantine at home, he had the Hellenic polish and "ideals" (he was elective chief magistrate of Athens at the time he rushed home), and for fourteen years he had lived a hostage in Rome, absorbing Rome's *Realpolitik*. Somewhat of a reincarnation of his ancestor Demetrius Poliorcetes, he was the first cosmopolite of the new era of the Roman dominion. If he outraged the temple at Jerusalem, Classical art owes a debt to his memory for his temple to Zeus Olympios at Athens, the few remaining columns of which are one of the glories of that ruined city. And if he perpetrated the edict that all his subjects should be one people, one religion—un-Greek enough!—he was but *anticipating the Roman imperial policy on which the Church ran afoul*. ... He was the first precipitant of the conflict between the World and the Bible religion.⁹

Verse 22 should be specially noted. As Antiochus is "credited" with betraying princes to whom he professed friendship, and in his day, according to Jewish tradition, the deposed high priest Onias III was murdered, so Rome broke the "prince of the covenant" in AD 31. The latter term is reminiscent of "the Prince of the host" (8:11), "the Prince of princes" (8:25), and "an anointed one, a prince" (9:25). Just as in Mt 24 and all Old Testament descriptions of "the day of the Lord," the perspective can abruptly change by the introduction of a feature that transcends the immediate historical occasion, so it is here.

25“And he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army; and the king of the south shall wage war with an exceedingly great and mighty army; but he shall not stand, for plots shall be devised against him. ²⁶ Even those who eat his rich food shall be his undoing; his army shall be swept away, and many shall fall down slain. ²⁷ And as for the two kings, their minds shall be bent on mischief; they shall speak lies at the same table, but to no avail; for the end is yet to be at the time appointed.”

Here is a typical instance of the perfidy of Antiochus as he professed friendship to his enemies before betraying them. The verses allude to his attack on Egypt in 169 BC. Two courtiers of Ptolemy VI had previously seized power in Egypt and then decided to invade Palestine. Antiochus defeated his opponents and took over the frontier fortress of Pelusium and also Memphis, fulfilling verse 26. After a pretended reconciliation, Ptolemy VI and his uncle Antiochus IV dined in apparent amity together, but treachery followed on both sides.

“The end is yet to be at the time appointed” calls for special comment. In essence the passage is saying that neither the design of the king of the north to wipe out the king of the south, and thus control the whole region, or the schemes of the

king of the south to overcome his opponent shall succeed. “The end” spoken of anticipates “the end” mentioned in verses 35 and 40. At “the time of the end” both the king of the south and the king of the north shall be brought to their end because of their opposition to the people of God.

Thus “the time appointed” in verse 27 anticipates verse 36, which describes the king of the north as prospering “till the indignation is accomplished; for what is determined [appointed] shall be done.” Verse 45 describes what these verses foretell. This is a further indication of the fact that the prophecy is not so much concerned with individuals as such, but the general antagonism to God’s people by worldly powers who are allowed to prosper “until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled” (Lk 21:24).

28“And he shall return to his land with great substance, but his heart shall be set against the holy covenant. And he shall work his will, and return to his own land.”

The first book of Maccabees offers the best commentary on this verse.

On his return from the conquest of Egypt, . . . Antiochus marched with a strong force against Israel and Jerusalem. In his arrogance he entered the temple and carried off the golden altar, the lamp-stand with all its equipment, the table for the Bread of the Presence, the sacred cups and bowls, the golden censers, the curtain, and the crowns. . . . He seized . . . whatever secret treasures he found, and took

them all with him when he left for his own country. He had caused much bloodshed, and he gloated over all he had done.

Great was the lamentation throughout Israel (1 Maccabees 1:20-25, NEB).

In the original the expression “work his will” is not identical with the passage translated “according to his will” elsewhere in Daniel. Literally it reads, “And he shall do, and return to his own land” (see RV).

29 "At the time appointed he shall return and come into the south; but it shall not be this time as it was before. ³⁰For ships of Kittim shall come against him, and he shall be afraid and withdraw, and shall turn back and be enraged and take action against the holy covenant. He shall turn back and give heed to those who forsake the holy covenant."

These verses picture the second attack on Egypt by Antiochus. The fact is emphasized that this attempt will have a less glorious outcome than the former. Messengers from the Roman Senate encountered Antiochus as he besieged Alexandria. "Kittim," while originally Cyprus, came to signify all those regions which, from a Palestinian viewpoint, lay directly to the west. The LXX translates this passage: "And the Romans will come . . ." The Dead Sea Scrolls also call the Romans Kittim.

C. Popilius Laenas was the head of the Roman embassy. He told Antiochus that the Senate demanded his withdrawal from Egypt. As the Syrian leader vacillated in the giving of his reply, the Roman drew around Antiochus a circle on the sand of the shore with his staff. He

demanding an answer before Antiochus moved from the circle. Intimidated, the Syrians withdrew from Egypt. Rome was the only lord they would acknowledge.

The sequence in the verses suggests that Antiochus vented his spite on the Jews as he returned toward home. Or the fact may rather be that he decided to consolidate the territory already in his power. As an apostle of Hellenic culture, Antiochus desired to Hellenize the Jewish people, and he proved successful with a large number. The latter became his fifth column, collaborating in every attempt to dissolve the traditional worship. These were the ones described in this passage as forsaking the holy covenant. They prefigured the apostates from the Christian church in later times.

³¹"Forces from him shall appear and profane the temple and fortress, and shall take away the continual burnt offering. And they shall set up the abomination that makes desolate. ³²He shall seduce with flattery those who violate the covenant; but the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action. ³³And those among the people who are wise shall make many understand, though they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plunder, for some days. ³⁴When they fall, they shall receive a little help. And many shall join themselves to them with flattery; ³⁵and some of those who are wise shall fall, to refine and to cleanse them and to make them white, until the time of the end, for it is yet for the time appointed."

Sir Isaac Newton and some others refer the remainder of the chapter from this verse to the Romans. Newton translates the first part of verse 31: "After him Arms, that is, the Romans, shall stand up." It is a fact that at the very time that Antiochus left Egypt the Romans became the conquerors of Macedon, thus terminating the reign

of Greece. Jerome, however, is perhaps more to the point when he suggests that the narrative here continues the history of Antiochus, but now only with those features that directly and particularly bear on the antichrist. The most impressive fact of all is that Christ quotes from 9:27; 12:11; and the present verse, and with great definiteness declared

that the very thing foretold by Daniel in these verses with reference to "the abomination of desolation" was shortly to be perpetrated by the Roman destroyers of Jerusalem and also ultimately in antichrist's attack on the church (see Mt 24:15-27).

Antiochus Epiphanes set up an idolatrous image in the sanctuary and suspended the regular services. To every true Jew the sanctuary was now profaned and desolate. Two centuries later the idolatrous Roman banners were erected in the temple courts, and a great fire brought Israel's temple worship again to an end. Yet more centuries brought another defiling of the temple when the larger part of the Christian church permitted pagan practices and allowed their devotees to "take away" the preaching and practice of the true gospel, replacing it with an idolatrous form of worship.

The parallels are precise and impressive. Undoubtedly they were "written for our instruction, that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope" (Rom 15:4). Another fulfillment to be anticipated is one that applies eschatologically and that has been sketched for us, not only in Mt 24 but also in 2 Th 2 and Rev 13:3-18 (see the comments on 11:40-45 and also the discussion on the terminus of Dan 8 in the preface to chapter 8).

Verses 32-35 are an apt portrayal of the days of the Maccabees and allude to the deeds of the pious Hasidim (see 1 Maccabees 1:60; 2:31-38; 2 Maccabees 6:18-31; 7; and cf. Heb 11:36-38). The very best that men could do in those days is only thought of by the recording angel as "a little help." It is important we notice that nothing is said here about "the cleansing of the sanctuary" under the Maccabees. Gabriel does not regard the restoration of the temple in 165 BC by the Jewish patriots as the fulfillment of Dan 8:14. He plans to set forth the real accomplishment promised by that passage in the epilogue of chapter 12. Wrote A. C. Welch:

The writer . . . would never have said that the Maccabean rising fulfilled his prediction. His hope for the end has a scope and a character which no rebellion, however motivated by religion, could ever claim.¹⁰

The verses under discussion fit the persecutions of the early Christian church under pagan Rome and those of the Middle Ages under papal Rome even more appropriately than the period just referred to. The histories of the Christian church from the early Roman persecutions in the first century until the end of the eighteenth century offer a legion of examples fulfilling this inspired forecast.

Even in 1798 the verses do not cease to find their fulfillment. It is here declared that these things will happen even until "the time of the end." This does not mean that they will terminate before that period begins, but rather that their occurrence will apply even to that closing era. The close of the "time, two times, and a half" brought a lull rather than a cessation of the persecutions by antichrist. The last verses of the chapter and the first verse of the following chapter make this quite clear. The worst time of trouble is yet ahead for both the church and the world.

During the final tribulation many will be overthrown and all the saints will be anathematized (see comments on vs. 41 and 44). Thus as the next verse (36) affirms that antichrist will prosper till God's indignation is accomplished upon him, so verse 35 is saying that his power continues until the last days of probation have expired. As the close of the 2300 days approached, "the time of the end" began with the unsealing of the sealed book by successful investigation of those prophecies about the latter days that had hitherto been "shut up" or sealed. It finds its culmination in the end of time. Therefore the reference in verse 35, "until the time of the end," must be applied to that whole period and not merely to its beginning.

36 "And the king shall do according to his will; he shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak astonishing things against

the God of gods. He shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished; for what is determined shall be done. ³⁷He shall give no heed to the gods of his fathers, or to the one beloved by women; he shall not give heed to any other god, for he shall magnify himself above all. ³⁸He shall honor the god of fortresses instead of these; a god whom his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts. ³⁹He shall deal with the strongest fortresses by the help of a foreign god; those who acknowledge him he shall magnify with honor. He shall make them rulers over many and shall divide the land for a price."

The dramatic intensity of events increases as the chapter progresses. These verses transcend Antiochus and pagan Rome, though including

reminiscences of them. They are applied in the New Testament to antichrist (see 2 Th 2; Rev 13; 17). Note the following set of parallels:

Antichrist (Daniel 11)

"The king . . . shall exalt himself"
(v. 36).

"The king . . . shall . . . magnify
himself above every god"
(v. 36).

" . . . shall speak astonishing things
against the God of gods" (v. 36).

" . . . shall prosper" (v. 36).

" . . . shall prosper till the indig-
nation is accomplished" (v. 36).

Antichrist (Other Scriptures)

" . . . exalts himself" (2 Th 2:4;
see also Is 14:13; Dan 11:14).

" . . . in his own mind he shall magnify
himself" (Dan 8:25).
"It magnified itself, even up to the
Prince of the host" (Dan 8:11).

"He shall speak words against the Most
High" (Dan 7:25).
"And the beast was given a mouth utter-
ing haughty and blasphemous words"
(Rev 13:5; see also Dan 7:9, 11, 20).

"The horn acted and prospered"
(Dan 8:12).
"He shall make deceit prosper"
(Dan 8:25).

" . . . shall think to change the times
and the law" (Dan 7:25).
"If any one worships the beast,
 . . . he also shall drink
the wine of God's wrath, . . .
of his anger" (Rev 14:9, 10; see
also Is 13:5; Jer 50:25).
"And as I looked, the beast was slain,
and its body destroyed" (Dan
7:11).

"He shall give no heed to the gods of his fathers" (v. 37).

"He shall not give heed to any other god, for he shall magnify himself above all" (v. 37).

"He shall honor the god of fortresses instead of these" (v. 38).

"... a god whom his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts" (v. 39).

"He shall make them rulers over many" (v. 39).

Almost all evangelical Protestants have for centuries applied 11:36-39 to the Papacy. (Such volumes as Froom's *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* can be reviewed with profit for the evidence.) Over the past century or so a growing number have applied these verses to a future antichrist. Such expositors should by no means be limited to dispensationalists. In view of what Scripture has to say regarding earth's last confederacy under the direction of satanic spiritism and in view of the apotelesmatic principle, we have no quarrel with this application, *providing it does not deny previous historic fulfillment of the passage*. Verses 40-45 are an obvious consummation to what is begun in verses 36-39, and therefore some type of latter-day application should be looked for.

"King" should not be restricted to a single individual as dispensationalists usually do. In most cases in this book it stands for "kingdom," or

"... who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship" (2 Th 2:4; see Rev 17:13, 14).

"... who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship" (2 Th 2:4).

"His power shall be great [but not with his power. Fn.], and he shall cause fearful destruction" (Dan 8:24).
"Forces from him shall appear" (Dan 11:31).

"And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all who have been slain on earth" (Rev 18:24).

"The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and bedecked with gold and jewels and pearls" (Rev 17:4; see also Rev 18:12-19; Is 44:9).

"The whole earth followed the beast with wonder" (Rev 13:3).

"All who dwell on earth will worship it" (Rev 13:8).

"dynasty" (see 7:17, 18). The truth is illustrated by this saying: "The king is dead; long live the king!" A system is here intended, one that can influence the world scene, not a petty dictator in Palestine or elsewhere.

Some have sought to break the continuity between this passage and the preceding verses, as though verse 36 begins not a new installment of an old story, but something entirely new. Such a view is not founded on the evidence. Before the word *king*, we have the definite article, implying it is a continuation of the power already being described.

From verse 15 to the end of this chapter we have the king of the north ever in focus. He assumes larger and larger proportions from Syrian kings to pagan Rome, from pagan Rome to papal Rome, and from papal Rome to the last confederacy in which it plays a prominent role. It should be stressed that this power described in verses 36-39 persists until the end of time. The

indignation referred to, which marks its end, is identical with "the decreed end" of 9:27 that is to be "poured out on the desolator." The word for "decreed" in 9:27 is the same as that translated "determined" in verse 36.

The apostasy from primitive Christianity is indicated by the statement that "he shall give no heed to the gods of his fathers" (v. 37). The "one beloved by women" is an allusion to the Messiah. Jewish women longed to be mothers in the hope that the promised "seed of the woman" might be theirs (see Gen 30:23; Lk 1:25, 28).

The expression "he shall not give heed to any other god" does not imply an atheistic power but rather one that is excessively proud. The next statement clarifies the matter when it says, "... for [i.e., inasmuch as] he shall magnify himself above all."

What is intended by "the god of fortresses"? First we would point out that in verse 31 the temple is called a "fortress." Throughout this chapter the word is used for power centers. The sanctuary was a center of spiritual power, but this self-exalted king seeks the power that flatters pride. As Lucifer of old wished to be like the Most High in power but not in character, so it is with the antichrist. He, too, would dwell "on the mount of assembly in the far north," having said in his heart, "I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God" (Is 14:12-14). The desire to rule is thus expressed. This power is determined to govern the world. Instead of spiritual power, it seeks carnal might.

About the fourth century of our era the Christian church succumbed to that temptation which her Lord had resisted. "All the kingdoms of the world" seemed within her grasp if she would but compromise. The Word of Scripture ceased to be the guiding influence and was gradually replaced by pagan philosophy and heathen traditions. To part with Scripture meant also the forfeiting of the power of the Holy Spirit. The promise of true power was only for those who received the Third Member of the Godhead (see Acts 1:8). How did the church seek to remedy this deficit? It turned to the power of the civil arm, and it was carnal force that henceforth implemented

ecclesiastical decrees.

11:38, 39 points to the insatiable quest for the place of God by antichrist. He will employ every means to this objective. The "god whom his fathers did not know" is the goal of earthly might and dominion that the early church shunned. To achieve this goal, all precious things—gold, silver, jewels—are employed. This characteristic of the worshiping of power is implicit in all the previous descriptions of the fourth world empire, ever pictured as a ravenous, greedy, lustful kingdom, seeking to absorb all things into itself. This ambition for carnal strength is a strange or alien god, because until the days of Rome no religion made political world conquest its objective. The apostate system, finally to rule the world, achieves that supremacy because it has sought that objective more wholeheartedly than all its predecessors (see 4:30; Rev 18:7; and Gen 11:4 for the spirit here sketched). Rev 13:13-18 shows the outcome of such an ambition fulfilled—all the world will be made to conform to antichrist or be anathematized.

The warning beneath this description of antichrist should not be ignored. Readers do ill if they do not first apply the passage to their own hearts and experience. Wherever the spirit of pride, self-exaltation, and inordinate ambition is indulged, wherever anything is valued above the will of God, or wherever the desire to hurt those who differ is cherished—there is the spirit of antichrist, regardless of how orthodox the doctrines professed by the individual or group.

The last sentence of verse 39 indicates that having become the possessor of the world, antichrist is able to reward his chief helpers with corresponding positions of authority.

The following statement by a former president of Princeton Theological Seminary is worthy of reflection:

Clericalism is the pursuit of power, especially political power, by a religious hierarchy, carried on by secular methods and for purposes of social domination."

40 "At the time of the end the king of the south shall attack him; but the king of the north shall rush upon him like a whirlwind, with chariots and horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall come into countries and shall overflow and pass through. ⁴¹He shall come into the glorious land. And tens of thousands shall fall, but these shall be delivered out of his hand: Edom and Moab and the main part of the Ammonites. ⁴²He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. ⁴³He shall become ruler of the treasures of gold and of silver, and all the precious things of Egypt; and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall follow in his train. ⁴⁴But tidings from the east and the north shall alarm him, and he shall go forth with great fury to exterminate and utterly destroy many. ⁴⁵And he shall pitch his palatial tents between the sea and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, with none to help him."

We enter now upon delicate ground, as this is obviously the realm of unfulfilled prophecy.¹² Expositors are not prophets, but rather interpreters of prophecy. Christ has warned us that full assurance of understanding comes *after* a prophecy's fulfillment, not before (see Jn 14:29).

George McCreedy Price, in his outstanding commentary on Daniel, penned the following suggestion in his comments on this chapter:

Since the book of the Revelation is rightly regarded as a further expansion of these prophecies of Daniel, especially of their latter portions, which deal more specifically with our own days, as the period just preceding the resurrection and the second coming of Christ, with the revived or rejuvenated papacy as the final persecutor of the people of God, we surely have a right to expect in this chapter some mention of this final, deadly conflict of the church with the powers of darkness.¹³

From about the middle of the eleventh chapter onward, the prophecy becomes less local and nationalistic, and more and more distinctly religious and of global significance. It is absolutely certain that in its outcome (which of course reaches over into the next chapter, for the chapter divisions obscure the unity of the entire vision) the prophecy is of world-wide application. It deals with the close of probation, the time of trouble on all the nations of the world, and the final deliverance of the people of God, which in this age must be in all the earth. Both God's work and that of His enemy are today on a global scale.

Moreover, it is a principle of universal validity that all the other prophecies of the Old Testament, if they reach down to periods this side of the cross, always become more abstract and spiritual; for the concrete, objective things of the Old Covenant have now become spiritualized, what was local and nationalistic now becoming world-wide and universal.

Literally hundreds of terms, like Zion, Israel, etc., have since the cross come to us with wider and more spiritual connotations. One reason for this providentially planned situation is that the people of God are now found on all the continents of the world; hence the new wine positively cannot be confined in the old bottles. "If ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to the promise." The book of the Revelation also has many examples of the greatly enlarged, or global, application of the various prophecies of the Old Testament, especially in those dealing with the closing events of the gospel age.

Since all this cannot be denied, we have a right to expect that from this fortieth verse and onward we shall be dealing with more abstract and more religious, or spiritual, ideas. These will also be more world-wide, though spoken of under the old familiar terms used by the Jews of twenty-five centuries ago, which must now be treated as symbols.¹⁴

The guiding principles for interpreting these verses could not be better expressed than Price has expressed them in this quotation.

These verses confirm the explanation offered

earlier for "the god of fortresses." We see antichrist trampling over the world to subdue it until all the world wonders after the beast (see Rev 13:3). Country after country falls before it, until the ends of the world are reached. Only one citadel withstands him—the glorious mountain of God's people. The treasures of gold, silver, and precious things fall into the hand of the desolator, but a tiny remnant people yet avoid his control. The fury of the king of the north overflows in the scalding determination to destroy them. "Yet he shall come to his end." None shall help him, for none have been bound to him by the ties of genuine love.

It is of particular interest to the student of prophecy to find that Christ Himself has given us a commentary on these verses. In His second-advent sermon, when describing the final crisis as well as the last days prior to Jerusalem's fall, He warned:

"Then they will deliver you up to tribulation, and put you to death; and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. And then many will fall away, and betray one another, and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. And because wickedness is multiplied, most men's love will grow cold. But he who endures to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations; and then the end will come.

"So when you see the desolating sacrilege spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. . . . For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world. . . .

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days . . . will appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; . . . and he will send out his angels, . . . and they will gather his elect" (Mt 24:9-31).

This passage contains several allusions to the closing portion of Dan 11 and the opening of chapter 12. No less a scholar than C. H. Dodd has declared that the expression "many will fall away" is a reference to 11:41, and the LXX confirms this. The reference to "great tribulation" accords exactly with the situation pictured in 11:44-12:1 when antichrist goes to anathematize all who resist him. Mt 24:21 is a direct quotation from 12:1. The promise that "he who endures to

the end will be saved" has light cast upon it again by the LXX, which used the same Greek word for "saved" in 12:1 with reference to those who are to be saved out of the final tribulation. Furthermore, Christ declares it is the spread of the tidings of the gospel that brings the end. Almost certainly this is what is symbolically portrayed by the "tidings" that in 11:44 are said to alarm antichrist and dispatch him on his last mission of death, thus precipitating the end of all things. The use of the word *end* repeatedly in Mt 24 springs from chapters 8, 9, 11, and 12 of Daniel, which also use the word repeatedly in connection with the same final crisis of which Christ speaks.

Straight after His reference to the end, Christ referred to "the desolating sacrilege" or, as it would be more literally translated, to "the abomination of desolation," standing in the holy place. This points directly to 9:27; 11:31; 12:11; but also to 11:45 where the desolating, idolatrous king of the north is described as "standing" (see LXX) between the Mediterranean and Dead seas outside the "glorious holy mountain." In AD 70, at the first fulfillment of our Lord's words, it was the Roman banners, as Cestius approached the city, which gave the Christians their warning for flight. Christ is giving, however, a warning that also applies to the end of time when spiritual Jerusalem, the church, is also to be surrounded in a time of trouble such as never was (cf. Mt 24:21 with Dan 11:45-12:1).

Let us now return to a more detailed examination of this closing passage of chapter 11.

In verse 40 the titles "king of the north" and "king of the south" meet us again after a long pause. We should note that there are only the two powers in the text, not three (see all modern versions).

In ancient times both Babylon and Syria to the north and Egypt to the south were enemies of Israel. Thus we may agree with Wordsworth that the present verse "foretells that a struggle will arise in the last times between two Powers opposed to the true Church."¹⁵

Who is the "king of the south" in these latter days? Because the prophecy applies to the days of the new covenant when God's Israel is spiritual Israel and worldwide, all the other national names

associated with Israel of old must likewise be given spiritual and extended meanings. Pharaoh of old set forth the spirit of Egypt when he exclaimed, "Who is the Lord, that I should heed his voice? . . . I do not know the Lord" (Ex 5:2). Rev 11:8 uses Egypt to signify that which is opposed to true religion. Lange suggests that "Egypt is the symbol of a magical natural science and deification of nature."¹⁶ Thus here in 11:40 some antichristian power, an atheistic power that puts all its trust in natural wisdom and human science, will in the last days thrust at the Papacy. We are reminded of a comment about a spirit in our modern world that is leading it toward the last crisis:

Anarchy is seeking to sweep away all law, not only divine, but human. The centralizing of wealth and power; the vast combinations for the enriching of the few at the expense of the many; the combinations of the poorer classes for the defense of their interests and claims; the spirit of unrest, of riot and bloodshed; the world-wide dissemination of the same teachings that led to the French Revolution—all are tending to involve the whole world in a struggle similar to that which convulsed France.¹⁷

Very likely some latter-day movement opposed to religion is intended by "the king of the south." Only "the day shall declare it" with certainty.

But the outcome of this attack on the king of the north is not in doubt. Gabriel declares that the spiritual Babylon of the last days will turn against its antagonist with great fury and flood over the world victoriously till even the most distant powers (then thought of as Libya and Ethiopia) are brought to "follow in his train." This is a repetition on a larger scale of the "overflowings" of the kings of the north in much earlier days (see vs. 10, 16, 22). The statement, in Rev 13:8, "and all who dwell on earth will worship it, every one whose name has not been written . . . in the book of life" comes to mind as one reads these verses in Daniel.

Who are intended by "Edom, Moab, and the main part of the Ammonites"? These nations have perished long since, and this in itself is another evidence that we are not intended to construe this

passage literally. Whom do they represent in new-covenant times? In ancient days these nations were the enemies of God's people, but God in His grace has promised to save many who were once His enemies. Indeed, every saved person was originally an enemy of God (see Rom 5:10). In Is 11:11-16 we read that in the latter days, when God has set His hand to gather out His people from all the world, Israel will be used of Him to spiritually conquer "Edom and Moab, and the Ammonites." Many will come out of groups once opposed to the truth of God, and they will take their place in Zion, the glorious holy mountain, the church of Christ. Thus they will be "delivered" (cf. 12:1 and 11:41).

Verses 42 and 43 describe the all-encompassing nature of the victories of antichrist. Former enemies such as Egypt are subdued under him, and the wealth of the world pours into his coffers, and even distant lands acknowledge his sway.

Now we come to the "tidings from the east and the north." We do not expect the points of the compass to be any more literally intended than the national names. What do they mean here, and concerning what are the tidings?

In Rev 18:1-4 and Eze 43:1, 2 we are told that a message from heaven (described in Ezekiel as from "the east") will enlighten the earth just prior to its last hour. The tidings of "the everlasting gospel" will invite men and women from error to truth, from sight to faith, from flesh to spirit, from self to Christ, from Babylon to the holy Jerusalem of the church. North, as well as east, is used in Scripture as a symbol of heaven (see Ps 48:2; cf. Is 14:13). The adversary counterfeited his Divine Enemy when he established Babylon to the north of Jerusalem. Thus the tidings that will stir up antichrist to his last attack will be the final proclamation of the gospel.

This proclamation, of necessity, warns against the false gospel that antichrist offers. Rev 18:1-4 is an enlargement of Rev 14:6-12, where the message is spelled out in more detail. This message is shown to comprehend:

1. a call to believe the everlasting gospel in view of the fact that the hour of God's judgment is come.
2. a warning against Babylon, which through

the ages has offered a counterfeit gospel. Babylon has called upon men to follow the Babel-builders of old, who set out to make their own way to heaven in the hope of establishing a name for themselves forever (see Gen 11:4 and excursus on Dan 8:10-13).

3. a call to obedience to the faith of Jesus and the commandments of God in view of a coming demarcation between all men, resulting in those who receive the mark of the beast and the wrath of God and those who receive the seal of God and His salvation. Thus is symbolically portrayed the fact that all men must be conformed to either the character of Satan or the character of Christ. All depends on what we consider worthy of worship—self the creature or God the Creator.

The word translated "utterly destroy" literally means "to sentence to death on religious grounds." It implies the anathematization of all who accept the warning of verse 44 and who endeavor to flee out of Babylon. This death threat is more fully elaborated in Rev 13:13-18. By this pronouncement of its anathema, spiritual Babylon—the king of the north—surrounds spiritual Jerusalem. The picture is that of a besieging army with its tents around the beleaguered city.

Thus the "breaker" has come up against God's people, but we are assured concerning him that "he shall come to his end, with none to help him." It is an echo of verse 14: "but they shall fail." The following verse tells us why. Michael, who stands on guard over His threatened people, arises in splendor to meet the enemy and to lay him low.

¹ Haskell, p. 178.

² *Jewish Antiquities*, XI. 8.4, 5.

³ W. W. Tarn, *The Cambridge Ancient History*. Edited by J. B. Bury et al (Cambridge: University Press, 1927), Vol. VI, p. 436.

⁴ E. R. Bevan, cited by Heaton, p. 228.

⁵ Edwyn R. Bevan, *The House of Seleucus* (London: Edward Arnold, 1902), Vol. II, p. 37.

⁶ Cited by Young, pp. 306, 307.

⁷ Moses Stuart, cited by Young, p. 241.

⁸ E. R. Bevan, cited by Heaton, pp. 232, 233.

⁹ Montgomery, pp. 449, 450.

¹⁰ Welch, p. 50.

¹¹ John A. Mackay, *Time*, March 25, 1946, p. 72.

¹² Nevertheless, we would emphasize that 11:40-45 is not unique in its presentation of "the last things." The reader should study closely the parallel passages of Eze 38; 39; Joel 3; and Zec 14, all of which portray a final attack upon God's people by the powers of this world. As in 11:45, this attack is symbolically expressed as a siege of Jerusalem. In all five chapters the Israel of God is delivered by His intervention, which brings the enemy so completely to its end that "none shall help him."

¹³ Price, p. 273.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 314.

¹⁵ Wordsworth, Vol. 6, p. 59.

¹⁶ John Peter Lange, *The Revelation of John, a Commentary on the Holy Scriptures*, Vol. X of the New Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1874), p. 225.

¹⁷ Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1903), p. 228.

Preface to Daniel 12

The epilogue, not only of this last section of Daniel but of the whole book, sounds the note of triumph and offers encouragement and motivation for all who are threatened in their conflict with evil.

Often in the Scriptures the first is prophetic of the last. In each listing of the four kingdoms the first is literal Babylon and the last is spiritual Babylon; the first is the prototype of the last. The initial prophecy of Daniel (ch. 2) anticipates the sequence followed in the last prophecy, the main difference being that the latter begins with Cyrus, the conqueror of Babylon, rather than Nebuchadnezzar, its representative monarch (see 10:1). In chapter 11 the first king of the north, described as standing in the glorious land (v. 16), typifies the last king of the north, antichrist, who also shall "come into the glorious land" (v. 41).

Now let us compare this last chapter of Daniel with the first, or if we wish to ignore man-made divisions, we could talk in terms of the beginning of the book and its end. They are amazingly similar in some respects. Chapter 1 opens with an attack on the glorious holy mountain by the king of the north and the subsequent capture of Israel's host. This final chapter is also concerned with an attack made by the king of the north on the glorious holy mountain and his threat to the host of Israel.

But its opening verse promises that this time the result will be different. Israel, because faithful, will be delivered; and the enemy, instead of desolating, will be desolated, even brought "to his end."

The heart of this last chapter discusses the long period of test and trial for the people of God. They are to be purified, made white, and refined. As a result they become wise, and they—rather than the wicked—have understanding. They stand in their lot in judgment before the king, but then enter upon their appointed destiny with glorified natures that shine like the brightness of the firmament.

The first chapter too had spoken of the testing of the people of God. Daniel represented those who sought to purify themselves rather than be defiled. The faithful remnant was tested ten days, and at the end of the days their whole being seemed healthier, "better in appearance and fatter in flesh." They, rather than the Babylonians, were shown to have understanding when examined in judgment by the king, and as a result they were promoted to stand in his royal presence. Even some of the wording is identical in the two chapters. Compare the use of "at the end of the days" with "at the end of ten days" and "at the end of the time" (see 12:13; 1:15, 18). Compare also the use of "stand" in 12:13 with its use in 1:5

(see also Ps 1:5). And notice the use of "understand" and "understanding" in 12:10 and 1:17, 20. Chapter 12 is very evidently the counterpart of chapter 1.

The book commenced with the beginning of the end for the temple of God at Jerusalem. The book ends with the end of the beginning for the new temple—"the dwelling [Gr. tabernacle] of

God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them" (Rev 21:3; cf. Dan 12:1, 13). The ancient covenant promise (Lev 26:12) is fulfilled because God has found a people who, unlike Israel after the flesh, love and obey Him in gratitude for His "so great salvation."

Commentary on Daniel 12

1 "At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time; but at that time your people shall be delivered, every one whose name shall be found written in the book. ²And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. ³And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever."

The last verse of the previous chapter should never be studied apart from these verses. They complete the theme of Dan 11. They are the denouement of the terrible time of trouble pictured in 11:40-45. Evidently there is a little time of trouble during the final onslaught of antichrist, little in the sense of time rather than quality. Then follow the troubles consequent of Michael's "standing up"—troubles which accomplish the final purifying of the saints as well as the destruction of antichrist. Keil suggests that the expression "at that time" refers back to verse 40 with its allusion to "the time of the end." Others such as Zöckler believe that the former reference applies when "the trouble of the faithful shall . . . have reached its climax" in connection with the

attack described in 11:45.¹ There is an element of truth in each position, inasmuch as the time of trouble had its commencement prior to antichrist's final attack on the church but reaches its highest intensity at that point.

The reference to those whose names are "found written in the book" should be linked with the description of the judgment books in 7:10. Zöckler is right in referring to "those *who shall stand approved in the judgment*"—the "Divine register of Israel, upon which are entered all who *truly* belong to Israel."² The fact that their names are "found" implies a prior judgment of investigation. The same is taught in the closing verse of this chapter. The saints as well as the Gentiles are subjected to the scrutiny of God to

display to the universe whether they are hidden in the "Lord . . . [their] righteousness" (Jer 23:6).

Thus this opening verse pictures the taking of the kingdom of glory by Christ at the close of His priestly ministry. It includes the end of probation and His second coming. The living saints are delivered, and the sleeping ones are raised, while the living wicked who have joined themselves to antichrist are destroyed and the dead wicked left to slumber till their day of reckoning.

Many commentators have suggested that in verse 2 the emphasis is upon a special resurrection of the righteous, who along with the living saints are made to "shine like the brightness of the firmament." Where our verse has "some" it would be better to render the original as the great Hebraist Tregelles suggests—"the rest." It is from this passage that Jesus drew in Jn 5:28, 29, when He spoke of the two resurrections, one to eternal life and the other to the judgment of

condemnation (cf. Lk 14:14; 20:35, 36; 1 Cor 15:22-24; Rev 20:4-6). The Book of Revelation often enlarges the themes of Daniel, and its twentieth chapter expands this verse as it sets forth the millennium bounded at each end by a resurrection.

Verse 3 pictures the glory of the redeemed, and in Mt 13:43 Christ quotes it. The word used for "wise" can mean "teachers" and is probably parallel with the second half of the verse where "those who turn many to righteousness" are axated. It is implied that all who have come to know God inevitably do what they can to "share" Him. 11:33 should also be considered in order to fully explain this passage.

Thus these three opening verses of chapter 12 are really the end of the book. It is the remainder that is the true epilogue. Daniel, having been assured that "all's well that ends well," is given a few postscripts in the remaining verses.

4 "But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, until the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase."

This verse, coupled with 8:14-19, makes it clear that "the time of the end" begins with the unsealing of the closed portions of Daniel. When the prophecy of the 2300 years was illuminated by the Spirit of God in the 1840's, then it could be said that the seal was being removed from the book, and with the end of that period (1844) the

time of the end commenced (cf. Rev 10:6 with 14:6, 7).

"Running to and fro" is a Hebrew idiom for "searching." Thus the connection between the unsealing of the book and the increase of knowledge about its prophecies is explained (cf. Jer 5:1; Amos 8:12; Zec 4:10, KJV; 2 Chr 16:9).

5 Then I Daniel looked, and behold, two others stood, one on this bank of the stream and one on that bank of the stream. ⁶And I said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the stream, "How long shall it be till the end of these wonders?" ⁷The man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the stream, raised his right hand and his left hand toward heaven; and I heard him swear by him who lives for ever that it would be for a time, two times, and half a time; and that when the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end all these things would be accomplished. ⁸I heard, but I did not understand. Then I said, "O my lord, what shall be

the issue of these things?"⁹ He said, "Go your way, Daniel, for the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end. ¹⁰Many shall purify themselves, and make themselves white, and be refined; but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand; but those who are wise shall understand."

The reader should note that Gabriel's words, which began at 10:20, terminate at 12:4. Now we have Daniel again as the narrator. Zöckler correctly observes:

The new scene, however, which begins with this verse, and serves to introduce the epilogue, obviously occupies a more intimate relation to the scene, chap. x. 4 et seq., which introduces the last great vision.³

Thus here again we have the principle of the relationship between the first and the last. This closing prophecy ends as it began with Daniel by a river conversing with heavenly messengers.

We note that there is now a third messenger from heaven—probably in order that "in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established." Michael is about to promise the certainty of the defeat of wickedness and the salvation of the righteous. After the manner of men He extends His arms heavenward and promises by God Himself that all the things spoken of in Daniel's book shall be fulfilled.

The content of the oath summarizes the themes of Daniel. It refers to the oppression of the saints and the need of a theodicy. It assures men that the time of tribulation has been measured by God and shall not be greater than humanity can bear. And finally it pledges Heaven's assurance that "all these things"—the deliverance of His people from trouble and the grave, and their glorification—shall indeed "be accomplished." It should be observed that only the fourth kingdom and the antichrist that springs from it are in view in the pronouncement.

No wonder the Book of Daniel has been called by the title of "The Abomination of Desolation," for other earthly powers are mentioned in this book only by way of being a backdrop. "Through suffering to glory" is taught as surely in Daniel as in the Gospels. The antichrist is permitted to purify the saints.

The oath was in response to the human inquiry of "How long?" This duplicates 8:13, where the same query, this time by an angel, was made. The answer given now to Daniel is that the time of the unsealing of the book and the increase of knowledge could not dawn until the long centuries of papal supremacy were over. The message concerning the opening of the judgment and the beginning of the eschatological work of vindication could not take place before that period of intense religious activity succeeding the end of "a time, two times, and half a time," when men turned their attention to the latter-day prophecies.

The antichrist was first to lose its temporal power, and then by the spreading of the gospel in its purity it would lose its dominion over the souls of men who heard and believed the truth. Finally would come antichrist's final fling, as with apparently resurrection power he swept as conqueror over the earth. Then, at that time, "all these things would be accomplished," all things would be consummated.

Verse 10 is alluded to in Rev 22:11. The wicked who continue to do wickedly will be unable to change their course when the days of probation run out, but the righteous will grow stronger and stronger as continuing trials refine and purge them.

¹¹"And from the time that the continual burnt offering is taken away, and the abomination that makes desolate is set up, there shall be a thousand

two hundred and ninety days. ¹²Blessed is he who waits and comes to the thousand three hundred and thirty-five days."

We quote Wordsworth, who expresses views similar to our own on this passage:

Some form of infidelity and impiety will be established by Law even in the Christian Church, as our Lord Himself foretells (Matt. 24:15); as a heathen altar was set up by Antiochus Epiphanes in the temple at Jerusalem. . . .

So will it be in the last times. The Church itself will be betrayed by some in high place in her ministry, and by means of their timid and treacherous concessions and compromises it will be polluted by a form of worship which will make it execrable in the sight of God, and will cause all good men to weep and hide their faces in shame and sorrow.⁴

If we could place the words *the historical antichrist during the Dark Ages* where Wordsworth has—"under Antiochus"—the explanation would seem even more appropriate for Christians. Fausset suggests that "it is possible that the year-day and day-day theories are *both* true."⁵ And it may well be that prophecies which have been

fulfilled in years during the Christian age will have yet a final apotelesmatic fulfillment in days. False worship, in a form contrary to the commandments of God, is to be enforced upon the Christian church by antichrist in "the time of the end" (see Rev 13; 14). Such a test cannot now last for centuries. It seems to this writer that Michael, having spoken of the long historic period of antichrist's supremacy from AD 538 to 1798, now speaks directly on "the time of the end" (v. 9). He is saying that in this time of the end there will be a repeat performance of what happened through the Christian centuries. This is not to suggest that it is possible for anyone to calculate prophetic dates after 1844. Our suggestion has to do with the *duration* of the last crisis, not its beginning point.

The mention of an extra forty-five days in verse 12 implies that there may be a final testing pause between the maiming of the enemy in the last time of trouble and his absolute end at the coming of the Lord. (See Gen 7:9, 10 for a parallel situation when the world first came to its end.)

¹³"But go your way till the end; and you shall rest, and shall stand in your allotted place at the end of the days."

The last word is one of comfort to Daniel. Those "days" he has been puzzled about since hearing the words of Christ in 8:14—they are now referred to again, and he is told that at the end of them he will stand in the judgment and then in his place of eternal reward.⁶ In yet another sense he stands in his allotted place since the beginning of "the time of the end"—his book has become more fully understood and therefore more influential.

That word *rest* has a nostalgic ring about it for this age of unrest. To wring the best from it we must remember that God gives down payments on all His ultimate blessings. We live in the time of

the firstfruits, and we need not wait till death or for the new earth before experiencing God-given rest of sublime quality. The word was echoed by another Prince of the House of Judah, who in this book is called Michael. He tells of a "rest" we can have now, without waiting. It is a rest from guilt, immediately after we believe His promises, and a rest from sin through the sanctification that parallels our learning meekness and quietness of spirit from Him.

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden,
and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and

learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light (Mt 11:28-30).

¹ Zöckler, p. 261.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, p. 264.

⁴ Wordsworth, Vol. 6, p. 62. See also footnote 34 in the preface to chapter 8 for further comments on "the abomination of desolation."

⁵ Fauzet on 7:25.

⁶ See page 171 of preface to Daniel 8 for further comment on Dan 12:13.

Appendices

Appendix A

Parallel Nature of Daniel's Prophecies

	Chapter 2	Chapter 7	Chapter 8	Chapter 9	Chapters 11, 12
Babylon	The head of this image was of fine gold (v. 32). You, O king, the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, and the might, and the glory, and into whose hand he has given, wherever they dwell, the sons of men, the beasts of the field, and the birds of the air, making you rule over them all—you are the head of gold (vs. 37, 38).	The first was like a lion and had eagles' wings. Then as I looked its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand upon two feet like a man; and the mind of a man was given to it (v. 4).			
Medo-Persia	... its breast and arms of silver (v. 32). After you shall arise another kingdom inferior to you (v. 39).	And behold, another beast, a second one, like a bear. It was raised up on one side; it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth; and it was told, "Arise, devour much flesh" (v. 5).	I raised my eyes and saw, and behold, a ram standing on the bank of the river. It had two horns; and both horns were high, but one was higher than the other, and the higher one came up last. I saw the ram charging westward and northward and southward; no beast could stand before him, and there was no one who could rescue from his power; he did as he pleased and magnified himself (vs. 3, 4). As for the ram which you saw with the two horns, these are the kings of Media and Persia (v. 20).	... from the going forth of the word to restore and build Jerusalem ... (v. 25).	Behold, three more kings shall arise in Persia; and a fourth shall be far richer than all of them; and when he has become strong through his riches, he shall stir up all against the kingdom of Greece (11:2).
Greece	... its belly and thighs of bronze (v. 32). Yet a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth ... (v. 39).	Another, like a leopard, with four wings of a bird on its back; and the beast had four heads; and dominion was given to it (v. 6).	Behold, a he-goat came from the west across the face of the whole earth, without touching the ground; and the goat had a conspicuous horn between his eyes. He came to the ram with the two horns, which I had seen standing on the bank of the river, and he ran at him in his mighty wrath. I saw him come close to the ram, and he was enraged against him and struck the ram and broke his two horns; and the ram had no power to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled upon him; and there was no one who could rescue the ram from his power. Then the he-goat magnified himself exceedingly; but when he was strong, the great horn was broken, and instead of it there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven (vs. 5-8).	... sixty-two weeks [in part] (vs. 25, 26).	A mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion and do according to his will. And when he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not to his posterity, nor according to the dominion with which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be plucked up and go to others besides these. Then the king of the south shall be strong, but one of his princes shall be stronger than he and his dominion shall be a great dominion. After some years they shall make an alliance, and the daughter of the king of the south shall come to the king of the north to make peace; but she shall not retain the strength of her arm, and he and his offspring shall not endure; but she shall be given up, and her attendants, her child, and he who got possession of her. In those times a branch from her roots shall arise in his place; he shall come against the army and enter the fortress of the king of the north, and he shall deal with them and shall prevail. He shall also carry off to Egypt their gods with their molten images and with their precious vessels of silver and of gold; and for some years he shall refrain from attacking the king of the north. Then the latter shall come into the realm of the king of the south but shall return into his own land. His sons shall wage war and assemble a multitude of great forces, which shall come on and overflow and pass through, and again shall carry the war as far as his fortress. Then the king of the south, moved with anger, shall come out and fight with the king of the north; and he shall raise a great multitude, but it shall be given into his hand. And when the multitude is taken, his heart shall be exalted, and he shall cast down tens of thousands, but he shall not prevail. For the king of the north shall again raise a multitude, greater than the former; and after some years he shall come on with a great army and abundant supplies (11:3-13).
	... its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay (v. 33). And there shall be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron, because iron breaks to pieces and shatters all things; and like	Behold, a fourth beast, terrible and dreadful and exceedingly strong; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another horn, a little one, before	Out of one of them came forth a little horn, which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the glorious land. It grew great, even to the host of heaven; and some of the host of the stars it cast down to the ground, and trampled upon them. It magnified itself, even up to the Prince of the host; and the continual burnt	The people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary (v. 26). ... one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator (v. 27).	In those times many shall rise against the king of the south; and the men of violence among your own people [JHV: the robbers of thy people] shall lift themselves up in order to fulfil the vision; but they shall fail (11:14). a contemptible person (11:21)

Rome & Antichrist

iron which crumbles, it shall break and crush all these: And as you saw the feet and toes partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom; but some of the firmness of iron shall be in it, just as you saw iron mixed with the clay. And as the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle. As you saw the iron mixed with many clay, so they will mix with one another in marriage, but they will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay (vs. 40-43).

which three of the first horns were plucked up by the root, and behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things (vs. 7, 8). I looked then because of the sound of the great words which the horn was speaking. And as I looked, the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire (v. 11). Thus he said: "As for the fourth beast, there shall be a fourth kingdom on earth, which shall be different from all the kingdoms, and it shall devour the whole earth, and trample it down, and break it to pieces. As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings shall arise, and another shall arise after them; he shall be different from the former ones, and shall put down three kings. He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and shall think to change the times and the law, and they shall be given into his hand for a time, two times, and half a time. But the court shall sit in judgment, and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and destroyed to the end" (vs. 23-26).

offering was taken away from him, and the place of his sanctuary was overthrown. And the host was given over to it together with the continual burnt offering through transgression, and truth was cast down to the ground, and the horn acted and prospered. Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to the one that spoke, "But how long is the vision concerning the continual burnt offering, the transgression that makes desolate, and the giving over of the sanctuary and host to be trampled under foot?" (vs. 9-13).

Forces from him shall appear and profane the temple and fortress, and shall take away the continual burnt offering. And they shall set up the abomination that makes desolate. He shall seduce with flattery those who violate the covenant, but the people who know their God shall stand firm and last, as men. And these among the people shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plunder, for some days. When they fall, they shall receive a little help. And many shall join themselves to them with flattery, and some of those who are wise shall fall, to refine and to cleanse them and to make them white, until the time of the end, for it is yet for the time appointed.

And the king shall do according to his will; he shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, he shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods. He shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished; for when it is determined shall be done. He shall give no heed to the gods of his fathers, or to the one beloved by women; he shall not give heed to any other god, for he shall magnify himself above all. He shall honor the god of fortresses instead of these; a god whom his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts. He shall deal with the strongest fortresses by the help of a foreign god; those who acknowledge him he shall magnify with honor. He shall make them rulers over many and shall divide the land for a price.

At the time of the end the king of the south shall attack him; but the king of the north shall rush upon him like a whirlwind, with chariots and horsemen, and with many ships, and he shall come into the glorious land, and tens of thousands shall fall, but these shall be delivered out of his hand. Edom and Moab and the main part of the Amorites, he shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. He shall become ruler of the treasures of gold and of silver, and all the precious things of Egypt; and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall follow in tribute. Barbed iron shall be made, and the north shall alarm him, and he shall go forth with great fury to exterminate and utterly destroy many. And he shall pitch his palatial tents between the sea and the glorious holy mountain (11:31-45).

Yet he shall come to his end, with none to help him. At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince, who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time; but at that time your people shall be delivered, every one whose name shall be found written in the book. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever (12:1-5, 12:3).

The Judgment & Kingdom of God

A stone was cut out by no human hand, and it smote the images on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces, then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, all together were broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floor; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth (vs. 34, 35).

And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall its sovereignty be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand for ever; just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold (vs. 44, 45).

But the court shall sit in judgment, and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and destroyed to the end. And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, their kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey them (vs. 26, 27).

then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state (v. 14). He (the little horn), . . . by no human hand, he shall be broken (v. 25)

to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness. . . . and to anoint a most holy place (v. 24). The decreed and it poured out (v. 27).

Appendix B

The following quotations taken from H. G. Guinness, *Creation Centred in Christ*, were referred to in the section "The Special Characteristics of Prophetic Passages."

"3. . . . Old Testament history is New Testament mystery. The Old is full of the New. Historic types, personal types, ceremonial types abound in the pages of Revelation; typical events, typical persons, and typical ordinances crowd the providential scene. The principle which underlies these correspondences is evidently the *prophetic principle*. *Types are silent prophecies*. They unveil the future. They exhibit foresight and Divine direction. They demonstrate plan and purpose, and unfold in a profound and progressive way its nature or character. They hide from the wicked the knowledge designed for the spiritually wise. They link together the various parts of Revelation. They clothe abstract truths in visible forms, and create a harmonious prospect, a pleasing foreground in Revelation, for the contemplation and instruction of heaven-taught minds.

"4. There is a harmony and far-reaching progress in the use of Analogy in Scripture of a most impressive description. The theme of Redemption is kept in view from first to last, and the types of successive centuries are made to converge the whole of their light upon it. First the record of the order of Creation is directed so as to pre-figure and introduce the story of Redemption. The work of God in the physical realm is described as proceeding by a series of steps from darkness and disorder to light and perfection. The goal of Nature is man in the image of God, exercising universal dominion, and entering into the Sabbath rest of his Creator. The typical and prophetic harmony here with the order of Redemption is so obvious as hardly to need remark.

"The deep, death-like sleep which falls on Adam, who is the 'figure of Him who was to come,' and the derivation of woman from man, as 'bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh,' made in his image, even as he in the image of God, enfolds

as a type the 'mystery' of the relation of Christ to the Church. The introduction of Sacrifice immediately after the Fall and its continuation throughout the whole of Patriarchal and Jewish times sheds a long stream of prophetic light upon the Cross. The marked division of the human family from the very first into the 'Natural' seed and the 'Spiritual,' and the priority in chronological order of the natural, and ultimate supremacy of the spiritual over the natural, are features in Bible typology of peculiar interest. 'That was not first which is Spiritual, but that which is Natural, and afterwards that which is Spiritual.' I Cor. xv. 46.

"Again and again we trace this Divine order; we see it in the family of Adam in the relations of Cain, Abel, and Seth; in the family of Abraham, in Ishmael and Isaac; in the family of Isaac, in Esau and Jacob; in the family of Jacob, in Reuben and Joseph; and in the family of Joseph, in Ephraim and Manasseh. We see it in the family of Abraham as embracing the natural seed, or Jewish people, and the spiritual seed, or Christian Church. We see it in the story of the two generations of Israel in the Wilderness, that which fell through unbelief, and that which entered with Joshua into the promised land; and we see it in the counterpart of these in the external body of Apostate Christendom, as contrasted with the spiritual Church of true believers. In all these facts of Bible history there is evidently the presence of analogy. Typical relations expressing the same moral principle or spiritual truth reappear in narrative after narrative.

"The Apostacies of Patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian times, and the Judgments with which they terminate, are similarly connected by analogy; the Flood with its story of two worlds, the old and the new, with the world that now is, and that which is to come. The Exodus of Abraham, the Exodus of Israel, and the Exodus of the Church, are analogous; the wanderings and the warfare of Abraham's literal seed with those of his spiritual seed. The complex ritual of the Jews, the whole of their Tabernacle and Temple worship, every part of their sanctuary, every vessel, every ordinance, every sacrifice, had according to the

teachings of Scripture a typical significance. And the whole course of Jewish history was also typical, its Egyptian, Palestinian, Babylonian or Captivity and Restoration periods, prefiguring the history of the Christian Church, early or Martyr, Mediaeval and Reformed.

"Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world." Such types as these are silent prophecies evincing Divine foreknowledge and answer in the realm of the Revealed to the prophetic types in Nature, as the foreshadowing of the plant by the crystal, of the animal by the plant, and of man by the animal. In both cases the presence of the prophetic element is too evident to be denied, while the scale on which it exists is too vast, and the details of agreement too numerous and varied, for the correspondence to be the result of mere accident, or of the operation of blind, unintelligent tendencies."¹

"The lowly birth of the Church, its humble growth, its spiritual baptism, its witness to truth, its ministry of love, its conflicts with the powers of evil, its temporary defeat, its unjust condemnation, its cruel martyrdom, its joyful resurrection, and its glorious reign, have all been typified in the personal history and experiences of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"In the Apocalypse the prophetic sketch of the history of the Church resolves itself into the story of a double conflict with Satanic power, in the first of which the Church *overcomes*, while in the second it *is overcome*, but from which vanquished condition it rises by the quickening power of the Spirit, and ascends to the symbolical heavens in the sight of its enemies. The actual history of the Christian Church exhibits such a twofold conflict: first, under the cruel persecutions of Pagan Rome in the days of the Catacombs, and secondly, under the even worse persecutions of Papal Rome,

chiefly in the time of the Inquisition.

"It is remarkable that the history of Israel, which the Apostle Paul tells us was a type (*Tupos*) of that of the Christian Church, exhibits two great analogous conflicts, an initial one under the external oppressions of heathen Egypt, and a later one under the internal persecutions of conjoined Priestly and Kingly Israelitish power become apostate, and warring against the truth and people of the Most High.

"This twofold conflict is seen in its Prototypal form in the earthly history of our Lord. In His infancy, Herod, representing the purely *civil power*, sought His life, and in the attempt to destroy 'the young child,' slew all the children in Bethlehem 'from two years old and under.' Matt. ii. 16. From this destruction the new-born child was saved by the flight to the wilderness. Later on the conjoined ecclesiastical and civil powers (the latter acting under the instigation of the former) succeeded in putting Christ to a cruel and shameful death upon the Cross. But God raised Him from the dead, and exalted Him to His right hand in heaven. The history of Christ, then, in its twofold conflict, is the Prototype of the history of the Church; while the history of the Church, in its twofold conflict, is the archetype of the history of the natural Israel. Thus the whole system of revealed Typology converges to a common centre. The law of analogy reigns throughout. Not more strikingly or demonstrably does analogy reign in Nature than in Revelation. In Nature the whole system of Typology converges to a primary centre in man; in Revelation, in the Son of Man."²

¹ H. G. Guinness, *Creation Centred in Christ* (New York: A. C. Armstrong and Son, nd), pp. 120-123.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 128-130.

Appendix C

A nineteenth-century statement on dual or multiple fulfillments of prophecies. See in section "The Special Characteristics of Prophetic Passages."

"1. The same prophecies frequently have a double meaning, and refer to different events, the one near, the other remote; the one temporal, the other spiritual or perhaps eternal. The prophets

thus having several events in view, their expressions may be partly applicable to one, and partly to another, and it is not always easy to mark the transitions. What has not been fulfilled in the first, we must apply to the second; and what has already been fulfilled, may often be considered as typical of what remains to be accomplished. . . .

"Throughout the whole of prophetic Scripture, a time of retribution and of vengeance on God's enemies is announced. It is called the *'day of the Lord,'* *'the day of wrath and slaughter; of the Lord's anger, visitation, and judgment,'* *'the great day,'* and *'the last day.'* At the same time, it is to be observed, that this kind of description, and the same expressions, which are used to represent this great day, are also employed by the prophets to describe the fall and punishment of particular states and empires; of Babylon, by Isaiah (ch. xiii.); of Egypt, by Ezekiel (ch. xxx. 2-4. and xxxii. 7, 8.); of Jerusalem, by Jeremiah, Joel, and by our Lord (Matt. xxiv.); and in many of these prophecies, the description of the calamity, which is to fall on any particular state or nation, is so blended and intermixed with that general destruction, which, in the final days of vengeance, will invade all the inhabitants of the earth, that the industry and skill of our ablest interpreters have been scarcely equal to separate and assort them.

"Hence it has been concluded, by judicious divines, that these partial prophecies and particular instances of the divine vengeance, whose accomplishment we know to have taken place, are presented to us as types, certain tokens, and forerunners, of some greater events which are also disclosed in them. To the dreadful time of universal vengeance, they all appear to look forward, beyond their first and more immediate object. Little indeed can we doubt that such is to be considered the use and application of these prophecies, since we see them thus applied by our Lord and his apostles. (Many of the prophetic Psalms follow the same principles. That some of the Psalms are prophetic is clearly indicated in the New Testament. See Mt 22:43-45; cf. Mt 27:46 and Ps 22:1.)

"2. The second psalm is primarily an inauguration hymn, composed by David, the

anointed of Jehovah, when crowned with victory, and placed triumphant on the sacred hill of Sion. But, in Acts iv. 25. the inspired apostles with one voice declare it to be descriptive of the exaltation of the Messiah, and of the opposition raised against the Gospel, both by Jews and Gentiles.—The latter part of the sixteenth psalm is spoken of David's person, and is, unquestionably, in its first and immediate sense, to be understood of him, and of his hope of rising after death to an endless life; but it is equally clear from Acts ii. 25-31. that it was spoken of Christ, the son of David, who was typified by that king and prophet.—The twenty-second psalm, though primarily intended of David when he was in great distress and forsaken by God, is yet, secondarily and mystically, to be understood of our blessed Saviour during his passion upon the cross; and so it is applied by himself. (Matt. xxvii. 46.)

"And it is further observable, that other passages of this psalm (v. 8. 16. 18) are noticed by the Evangelist, as being fulfilled at that time (Matt. xxvii. 35. 43.); now it is certain that they could not be fulfilled unless they had been intended in this mysterious sense of Jesus Christ. The forty-fifth psalm is, in the original, a *song of loves*, an epithalamium on the nuptials of King Solomon and the King of Egypt's daughter; but from Heb. i. 8 we are assured that it is addressed to Christ; and, therefore, in a remote and spiritual sense, it celebrates the majesty and glory of his kingdom, his mystical union with his church, and the admirable benefits that would be conferred upon her in the times of the Gospel.

"It would be no difficult task to adduce many other psalms in which the double sense is most clearly to be discerned: but we shall proceed to cite a few instances from the writings of the prophets.

"(1). Isa. vii. 14.—In the *primary* but lower sense of this prophecy, the sign given was to assure Ahaz that the land of Judaea would speedily be delivered from the kings of Samaria and Damascus, by whom it was invaded. But the introduction of the prophecy, the singular stress laid upon it, and the exact sense of the terms in which it was expressed, make it in a high degree probable that it had another and more important purpose; and the event has clearly proved that the

sign given had, secondarily and mystically, a respect to the miraculous birth of Christ, and to a deliverance much more momentous than that of Ahaz from his then present distressful situation.

“(2). Isa. xi. 6.—What is here said of the wolf dwelling with the lamb, &c. is understood as having its first completion in the reign of Hezekiah, when profound peace was enjoyed after the troubles caused under Sennacherib; but its second and full completion is under the Gospel, whose power in changing the hearts, tempers, and lives of the worst of men, is here foretold and described by a singularly beautiful assemblage of images. Of this blessed power there has, in every age of Christianity, been a cloud of witnesses; although its most glorious aera, predicted in this passage, may not yet be arrived.

“The latter part of the same chapter, in which there are many beautiful allusions to the Exode from Egypt, seems to refer principally to the future restoration of the Jews from their several dispersions, and to that happy period when they and the Gentiles shall stand together under the banner of Jesus, and unite their zeal in extending the limits of his kingdom. This is a favourite theme with Isaiah who is usually and justly designated the Evangelical Prophet, and who (ch. xl.) predicted

the deliverance of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, and their restoration to the land of Canaan;—events which were primarily and literally accomplished, but which, by the evangelist Matthew (iii. 3.), and by our Lord himself (Matt. xi. 10.) are said to have been fulfilled by John the Baptist’s preaching in the wilderness of Judaea; and which, secondarily and spiritually, foretold the deliverance of mankind from the infinitely greater bondage of sin.

“(3). Once more.—Hos. xi. 1. *Out of Egypt have I called my son.* This passage, in its literal sense, was meant of God’s delivering the children of Israel out of Egypt; but, in its secondary and mystical sense, there can be no doubt that an allusion was intended by the Holy Spirit to the call of the infant Christ out of the same country. (Matt. ii. 15.)

“Thus it is evident that many prophecies *must be taken in a double sense*, in order to understand their full import; and this twofold application of them, by our Lord and his apostles, is a full authority for us to consider and apply them in a similar way” (T. H. Horne, *An Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures*, Vol. II, Part II, pp. 641-643).

Appendix D

This statement is taken from *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Vol. 1, pp. 1017-1019. It deals with the nature of the prophet’s work and the fulfillment of the prophecy. It was referred to in the section “The Special Characteristics of Prophetic Passages.”

“A Prophet. ‘Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning,’ that through them we ‘might have hope’ (Rom. 15:4). But we should not forget that though ‘these things’ were ‘written for our admonition,’ they also ‘happened unto them for ensamples’ (1 Cor. 10:11). Many prophetic statements, historical incidents, and types that clearly pointed forward to the Messiah had also a more immediate meaning

for those who heard and witnessed them. Prophetic messages addressed to the people of Israel were borne with respect to the historical circumstances that called them forth and were ordained of God to meet the needs of His people at the time they were given.

“Predictions of the OT prophets may be divided into the following four categories:

“1. Those that grew out of and were related only to the immediate historical situation or to events soon to occur. Such were Jeremiah’s acted prophecy of the wooden and iron yokes (ch. 28), his symbolic purchase of a field near Anathoth (ch. 32), and his prediction of the death of the false prophet Hananiah (ch. 28:15-17). Similarly, Ezekiel laid symbolic siege to a brick [“tile,”

KJV] in the marketplace of *Tel-abib* (chs. 4 and 5), Amos denounced Israel's neighbor nations (chs. 1 and 2), and Nahum predicted the fall of Nineveh (chs. 2 and 3).

"2. Those that pointed forward manifestly and exclusively to events related to the coming of the Messiah, such as the prophetic statements of Isa. 9:6, 7; 40:3-5; 53; 61:1-3; Dan. 9; Zech. 9:9; 13:1, 6, 7.

"3. Those prophecies of the book of Daniel that deal primarily with historical events of the remote future, that is, with the Christian Era and the time of the end, as specifically stated in the prophecies themselves (Dan. 2:44; 7:27; 8:14; 10:14; 11:40; 12:4).

"4. Those that have a dual application—first, to a local, historical situation; second, to the Messiah and to His kingdom. It is the prophecies of this fourth category that are most likely to be misunderstood and thus misapplied. Often this is because of a failure to realize that certain prophecies *do* have a dual aspect.

"The Scriptures abound with illustrations of prophecies having dual application. The promise to Abraham of a 'seed' (Gen. 12:7; 13:15; 22:18) clearly pointed forward to Christ (Matt. 1:1; Gal. 3:16), but met also a real and true fulfillment in the birth of Isaac (Gen. 13:16; 15:4, 5, 13; 17:7, 16, 19-21; 18:10; 21:1, 3). In fact, the earlier fulfillment in Isaac was a type of, and preparatory to, the ultimate fulfillment in Christ. A similar promise made to David was manifestly a prophecy concerning Christ (2 Sam. 7:12, 13; Matt. 1:1; Acts 2:30), yet it applied also to the birth of Solomon (1 Kings 8:20).

"When Moses was about to lay down his duties as leader, and the people wondered who would take his place, he made the inspired prediction, 'God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me' (Deut. 18:15). The context makes evident that this promise had an immediate application to the prophetic leadership of Israel in the years following the death of Moses (Deut. 18:18; cf. Ex. 20:19; Deut. 5:25-27; see also Num. 27:18-23; Deut. 34:9, 10; Hosea 12:10, 13), yet Inspiration declares that 'there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses' (Deut. 34:10; cf. Num.

12:6-8). Christ alone could fully meet the conditions set forth in Moses' prediction (see John 1:21; 6:14; 7:40).

"In a similar way the paschal lamb stood first for the literal, historical deliverance of Israel from Egypt, and later for the spiritual deliverance of all God's people from sin through the Messiah (1 Cor. 5:7). The rock smitten in the wilderness provided literal water for a thirsty people, and accordingly became a type of the Rock, Christ Jesus, who would offer the water of life freely to all men (John 4:10; 7:37; 1 Cor. 10:4). In like manner, the manna that fell from heaven provided bread to satisfy the hunger of Israel, but Jesus declared long afterward that He was 'the true bread from heaven' (John 6:31-33). The high priest Joshua was crowned with literal crowns, in prophetic anticipation of the coronation of Christ as priest and king (Zech. 6:9-13; 9:9).

"Referring to the deliverance of Israel from bondage, Hosea spoke of God calling His 'son out of Egypt' (Hosea 11:1), yet Matthew sees in the words of Hosea a prophecy of Christ (Matt. 2:15). Jeremiah's reference to 'Rahel weeping for her children' (Jer. 31:10, 11, 15, 16, 20) originally applied to the Babylonian captivity, as the context clearly reveals, but the evangelist finds it prophetic of Herod's slaughter of the infants of Bethlehem (Matt. 2:18). Isaiah vividly portrayed the spiritual state of Israel in his day (Isa. 6:9, 10; 29:13), but Christ declared these words prophetic of His generation (Matt. 13:14, 15; 15:7-9), saying, 'Well did Esaias prophesy of you.' Paul's exegesis of historical incidents and prophetic statements recorded in the OT conforms to the pattern set by Christ and the evangelists. In fact, he interprets many passages in such a way as might not always be evident from the OT alone (see Acts 13:32, 33; 2 Cor. 8:15; Gal. 3:13, 16; 4:22-31; 1 Tim. 5:17, 18; Heb. 1:5-8; 10:5). The NT writers thus constantly unfold, explain, and interpret the prophetic statements of the OT.

"These, and numerous other illustrations that might be given, make evident that Scriptural statements later seen to be prophetic of Christ were often full of literal and more immediate meaning to the people who first heard them and witnessed the events described. Their dim vision may, indeed,

have confined the inspired statements to their own day. But later, holy prophets guided by Inspiration saw in those very statements further prophetic meaning (Luke 24:25-27, 32; John 16:13; 1 Peter 1:10-12). It was often only when Christ or the Holy Spirit 'opened . . . their understanding' that men of Christian times began to 'understand the [OT] scriptures' in their fullness (Luke 24:45). Previously, like their unbelieving countrymen, they overlooked many prophecies that point to the first advent, and misapplied others that refer exclusively to the second (DA 30, 777).

"It is apparent, furthermore, that certain OT prophecies pointing forward to the coming of the Messiah and to the establishment of His kingdom apply in part to the first advent, and in part to the second. Thus, in His first sermon at Nazareth, Christ quoted Isa. 61:1-3 as being fulfilled 'this day' (Luke 4:16-21), yet significantly omitted reference to 'the day of vengeance of our God' (Isa. 61:2)—for the simple reason that the 'day of vengeance' comes only with the second advent. Elijah's appointed ministry of turning the hearts of Israel to their heavenly Father (1 Kings 18:36-40) is used by later prophets as a type of the work of John the Baptist (Isa. 40:3; Mal. 3:1; 4:5, 6; John 1:23; Matt. 11:9-17; 17:10-13; Mark 9:11-13; Luke 7:24-27). But the prediction of Elijah's appearance 'before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord' (Mal. 4:5) is also to be fulfilled again in our time (3T 62). At Pentecost, Peter pointed to Joel 2:28-32 as being fulfilled that day (Acts 2:16-21); but Joel's words are to find a second fulfillment in our day (EW 142; AA 54, 55). Similarly, certain of the predictions of Matt. 24 pointed forward both to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 and to the end of time (DA 628; GC 22, 25).

"The question naturally arises: How can we know when a particular historical incident may rightly be viewed as having a counterpart in a later event, or a prophetic statement as having a dual application? The answer is: When an *inspired writer* makes such an application of it. To go beyond that which is clearly set forth by Inspiration is to enter the realm of personal opinion. In an age when every wind of doctrine is blowing, it is well to make certain that our

understanding of Scripture rests upon a firm and plain 'Thus saith the Lord' (see Deut. 29:29; Isa. 50:11; Jer. 2:13; Matt. 7:24-28; 1 Cor. 2:4, 5, 12, 13; Eph. 4:14; Col. 2:2-4, 8; 2 Peter 1:16; Rev. 22:18). The safe rule in Biblical interpretation is to compare scripture with scripture. In no other way can we be secure against the fanciful, even grotesque, explanations that some have given to OT prophecies.

"Though only the local and immediate application may have been understood at the time the prophecy was originally given, yet in the foreknowledge of God provision was also made for the complete and ultimate application to Christ, or to the signs foretelling His second advent, or to the establishment of His kingdom. The fact that the prophets themselves may not have been aware that their inspired utterances had, at times, a dual application in no way impairs the validity of such an application. Rather, it testifies to the more than human wisdom that inspired the utterance. Abraham was not the only one of whom Christ could have said that he saw 'my day: . . . and was glad' (John 8:56), for the prophets themselves often gave diligent study to their own messages, the better to understand the Messianic import of which they themselves may at first have been but dimly aware (1 Peter 1:10-12).

"The force of a prophecy regarding Christ is in no way weakened because the prophet's words apply first to a more immediate historical situation. Often the first and more immediate fulfillment serves not only to confirm and to clarify the second but may even be requisite to it. When a NT writer applies the statement of an OT prophet to NT or subsequent times, to deny the validity of such an application is to deny the inspiration of the NT writer. But when the context of an OT statement makes evident that it applies also to an immediate historical situation, to deny this application would be to violate a primary rule of interpretation; namely, that an examination of context and historical setting is fundamental to a correct understanding of any passage.

"Believing both OT and NT writers to be fully inspired, we must, to be consistent, believe that certain prophecies have a dual application. Old Testament promises made originally to literal

Israel are to be fulfilled, in principle at least, to spiritual Israel. And as literal Israel looked forward to a 'rest' in the earthly Canaan, but failed

to enter in, it is our privilege to look forward in hope and faith to an eternal rest in the heavenly Canaan (Heb. 4:8-11; see also Matt. 25:34)."

Appendix E

Quotations from commentators on the relationship between the narratives and the visions:

"A great many little things link the two parts together as a unity" (Jeffery, p. 346).

"... the success stories of Dn 1-6. In addition to the fact that these collected stories are all more or less relevant for the situation of the persecution of Israel under Antiochus Epiphanes, it is the pesher interpretation which unites the two halves of the book. [The author of 7 was then responsible for collecting the stories of 1-6 and writing the concluding vision which gives them their theological unity. . . . Both Daniel and Qumran have the same understanding in terms of a suffering-exaltation pattern, although the former expresses this in the figure of the Son of Man and the latter does not.]"

"The stories of Dn 1-6 emphasize that witness unto death is preferable to idolatry. The pressure of persecution and the problem of the death of the martyrs led to apocalyptic with its double orientation: on the one hand *vindication* [emphasis supplied] for the persecuted and resurrection for the martyred dead, and on the other hand vengeance on the persecutors and on the apostates within Israel. It is not necessary to invoke Iranian influence in order to understand how the struggle came to be seen in cosmic terms, with the persecutor becoming the Anti-Christ and the persecuted the Son of Man. When the two themes of vindication and vengeance are combined, then the persecuted martyr advances from witness to the truth in his death to witness against the persecutors and apostates at the judgment, and finally to being the judge himself."

"From the time of Daniel onward the death of the martyrs presented a problem, and the martyr theology which developed was in terms of their

vindication. This is the situation in which the term Son of Man has its roots in Daniel" (Gaston, *No Stone on Another*, pp. 376ff., 382, 449).

"The newer picture of Dan. 4 arises from the Jewish Diaspora within the great civilised centres; Dan. 7 develops the theme further, when the bestiality is turned against God himself."

"Ch. 7 is in many ways the centre of the book of Daniel, and the link between the stories of 1-6 and the succeeding visions. It shares the language of 2-6 but the atmosphere of 8-12" (Barr, pp. 596, 598).

"In both halves of his book, the compiler is assuring . . . his contemporaries of consolation" (Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament, an Introduction*, p. 527).

"The four wings of the third beast needlessly duplicate its four heads and mean the same thing; the wings of the first beast are forced to do duty as a symbol for the excessive growth of Nebuchadnezzar's hair in his bestial state. Would the king's locks ever have been compared to eagle's feathers, were it not in anticipation of the winged representation of the beasts in VII? And would the point have seemed worth taking up in VII, unless the seer had been determined to talk about wings by hook or by crook? Everything is plain, when we see that Daniel was aiming at a synthetic effect. . . .

"I beheld till thrones were set, and an Ancient of Days did sit. . . . Thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was set and the books were opened.' The picture presented is that of a decree of the court of heaven; compare the 'decree of the watchers' in IV, 17 which sentenced Nebuchadnezzar."

"The feet of the great image split into ten toes, many kingdoms and factions, and even they are composite and weak. So heathen power becomes vulnerable and collapses, struck on the feet by the living stone.

"Undeterred by the moral of the vision, Nebuchadnezzar proceeds to epitomize his idolatrous empire in a mighty image of gold, which he compels all men to worship under pain of death. The Saints, represented by the 'Three Holy Children,' are as resolute as they are powerless before him. The ultimate vindication and enthronement of the Saints over the whole world is prefigured in the miraculous deliverance of the three children from the furnace, in the king's recognition of their God, and in his promotion of them over the affairs of Babylon. The material of this episode is directly drawn from the preceding vision of the great image, helped out by the scriptural commonplace, that as gold is tried in the furnace, so are acceptable men in the fire of adversity. They, and not the golden image, are seen to be that genuine metal which is prized by the wise.

"In the next episode Nebuchadnezzar dreams again, and sees empire this time as a great tree. The image is drawn direct from Ezekiel XXXI, helped out by Ezekiel XVII, 24 and, it may be, by Isaiah VI, 13. Nebuchadnezzar the great tree is cut down, but sprouts again when he comes to understand that his kingdom is the kingdom of God entrusted to him (Jer. XXVII, 5-8). And this prefigures the destruction of self-deifying heathendom, and the renewal of empire in a stock which administers its dominion as the dominion of God.

"The figure of the great tree cut down is overlaid with another, the figure of the king brutified. When Israel revolted from the kingdom of God and from Moses his servant, they set up their own devices. 'They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped a molten image. Thus they changed their Glory for the likeness of an ox that eateth grass' (Ps. CVI, 19-20).

"Nebuchadnezzar denies the kingdom of God, and asserts his own; but he has no sooner made himself the God of the world than he is seen to have changed his glory for the fashion of an ox

that feeds on grass. For this is the inwardness of all idolatry: it deifies the beast. So it befalls to Nebuchadnezzar, who deifies himself. The light of humanity, the divine similitude, shines in those eyes alone which look up to heaven, and acknowledge the dominion which is an everlasting dominion, and the kingdom enduring from generation to generation.

"Nebuchadnezzar, after seven years' punishment, is allowed space of repentance. Belshazzar his son, not heeding so evident a warning, brings forth the vessels his father had taken from the Temple at Jerusalem (II Kings XXIV, 13, Jer. XXVII, 18, Dan. I, 2), and profanes them in an idolatrous banquet. He is answered by the portent of the writing on the wall (Is. VIII, 1-4), which allows no time for repentance, but is immediately fulfilled in the fall of Babylon. We observe that Belshazzar's sin is the exact complement of his father's: Nebuchadnezzar exalts the symbol of idolatry, the golden image; Belshazzar abases the only symbols of the true cult which are in his possession, the temple vessels, by feasting with them in honour of the gods of gold, silver, brass, and iron, of wood and stone.

"The narrative theme of Daniel is now almost completed. We have seen royal arrogance humiliated and repentant; and we have seen it unrepentant and overthrown. Only one thing remains to be told. Daniel must be consecrated as the Three Children have already been. He must dedicate his life a sacrifice to the honour of God's Name, and must be miraculously delivered. The story of the den of lions fulfils this function.

"Just as the story of the Three Children developed the commonplace about acceptable men proved in the furnace of adversity, so the story of the den develops 'My life is among lions.' All the essential features of the story find their text in Psalm LVII; the Psalm even includes a link between the trial of Daniel and that of the Three Children. 'My life is among lions, I lie among them that are set on fire.'

"Being now made perfect, Daniel is ready for his great visions. He has formerly interpreted the dreams of kings, but now he dreams on his own account. Everything that he has hitherto learned is drawn together and more perfectly set forth by his

own first dream, the dream recorded in ch. VII. This dream is the symbolical centre of the book. In it the theological meaning of the succession of empire is most deeply expressed. The visions and oracles which follow it make the details of the predicted history more precise, and give exact assurances to the afflicted saints. But it is the seventh chapter which sets forth 'the mystery of the kingdom of God' (Farrer, *A Study in St. Mark*, pp. 261, 262, 253-255).

"Thus in Dan. 7 itself we find that the first beast 'was lifted up from the ground and made to stand upon two feet like a man; and the mind of a man was given to it' (v. 4). Exactly the same idea is to be found in the account in Dan. 4 of Nebuchadnezzar's dream and its sequel. In spite of the added confusion of the tree metaphor the contrast is clear: Nebuchadnezzar's mind is changed from a man's to a beast's; he lives with the animals in the fields and behaves like them, until his reason is restored. . . .

"What the context does suggest . . . is that the change from a man's mind to a beast's typifies Nebuchadnezzar's loss of reason. . . . But it is the interpretation which the author gives to this change that supplies the clue to its importance. For it is made quite clear that the reasons for Nebuchadnezzar's downfall and disgrace were his self-glorification and pride in his own achievement (v. 30). . . . According to chapter 4, it is when Nebuchadnezzar forgets that his kingdom and glory are God-given that he loses his dominion, not only over men, but over birds and beasts as well, and is reduced to the level of the beasts.

"The same emphasis on self-magnification is found in the later visions of Daniel. Thus in chapter 8 we read repeatedly of the animals and their horns that they magnified themselves. Similarly, chapter 11. . . . As for the beasts in chapter 7, it is self-evident that they . . . are in rebellion against God and have seized power for themselves. This connection between man's rebellious self-sufficiency and animal life is found also in the Psalms. . . . Ps. 73:21 f. . . . 49:21" (Hooker, *The Son of Man in Mark*, pp. 15, 16).

"These stories have hardly been sufficiently

appreciated. . . . Each one has its definite theme, and each is composed with notable dramatic art. . . . The bk. is founded four-square on the centuries-old belief that 'God is king, be the earth never so unquiet.' But its contribution to religion lies in its formulation of faith 'in the kingdom of God,' that men should 'know that the Highest rules in the kingdom of men' 4:22[ff.], (19).

"To this there is added the corollary, arising from the logic of faith rather than of intellect, of God's necessary vindication of his cause in the world. This may take place in the way of human catastrophes, as in the judgments upon Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar. Or else the godlessness of the world drives the faith and patience of the saints to the breaking-point, and the transcendental action of God is demanded; this theme appears in ch. 2, where the successive kingdoms of the world are represented as breaking down in a moment before the 'Stone cut without hands.' *In this scene there is the kernel of the Apocalyptic of the later chapters, the reason why an apocalyptic series could be composed as a supplement to the Stories*" (Montgomery, *ICC: Daniel*, pp. 100-102; italics supplied).

See also Bevan, *A Short Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, pp. 22, 23; Rowley, *The Servant of the Lord*, pp. 276, 279; Porteous, pp. 138, 139; A. Farrer, *St. Matthew and St. Mark*, p. 17; Bentzen, p. 87; Welch, p. 103.

Discussing the historical accounts in chapters 3-6, Keil writes on page 17:

"These four events have, besides their historical value, a prophetic import; they show how the world-rulers, when they misuse their power for self-idolatry and in opposition to the Lord and His servants, will be humbled and cast down by God, while, on the contrary, the true confessors of His name will be wonderfully protected and upheld. For the sake of presenting this prophetic meaning, Daniel has recorded these events and incidents in his prophetic book."

And commenting on the narrative that introduces the final prophecy, the same author says:

"This celestial person appears to him in such awful divine majesty, that he falls to the ground on hearing his voice, as already in ch. viii. 17 ff. on hearing his voice and message, so that he feared he should perish; and it was only by repeated supernatural consolation and strengthening that he was able to stand erect again, and was made capable of hearing the revelation. The heavenly being who appears to him resembles in appearance the glory of Jehovah which Ezekiel had seen by the river Chaboras (Chebar); and this appearance of the man clothed in linen prepared the contents of his revelation, for God so manifested Himself to Daniel (as He will approve Himself to His people in the times of the future great tribulation) as He who in judgment and in righteousness rules the affairs of the world-kings and of the kingdom of God, and conducts them to the issues foreseen; so that the effect of His appearance on Daniel formed a pre-intimation and a pledge of that which would happen to the people of Daniel in the future.

"As Daniel was thrown to the ground by the divine majesty of the man clothed in linen, but was raised up again by a supernatural hand, so shall the people of God be thrown to the ground by the fearful judgments that shall pass over them, but shall again be raised up by the all-powerful help of their God and His angel-prince Michael, and shall be strengthened to endure the tribulation. According to this, the very appearance of God has prophetic significance" (*ibid.*, pp. 404, 405).

As a typical instance of how some conservatives have applied the historical narrative settings in Daniel as explicative of the prophetic passages, note the *Pulpit Commentary*, which unfolds the meaning of Dan 9:24-27 in the light of the earlier narrative verses of the chapter.

"The inner connection between this brilliant prophecy and Daniel's prayer is to be carefully observed" (Thomson, p. 280).

"The thoughtful love of God adapted this new revelation to the capacity and mood of Daniel's spirit. Daniel had been dwelling on the seventy years which Jeremiah had declared to be the full period of Israel's captivity. His hope was resting on the fact that the seventy years were accomplished, and that God was faithful to his

word. Gabriel was charged to assure the prophet that restoration was nigh at hand, but that other epochs of 'seventies' were opening. The desolation of Jerusalem in the past was a type of a sadder desolation yet to come. The visible reconciliation between God and Israel (implied in the restoration of the Jews) was a type of a more complete reconciliation when sin should be purged away.

"By identifying himself with the nation, and confessing its sins as *his own*, Daniel himself had become a type of that Deliverer who should 'bear our sins' and 'make intercession for the transgressors.' Time is reckoned in weeks, to remind Israel of the perpetual obligation of the sabbath. After each cycle of desolation *rest* shall follow, until the world shall enter into the enjoyment of Jehovah's rest. The mind of Daniel is thus carried onward from the consummation he so much desired to a grander consummation still—the appearance of Israel's Messiah" (*ibid.*, p. 286).

A. R. Fausset, commenting on this same chapter 9 of Daniel, speaks similarly:

"Daniel takes his countrymen's place of confession of sin, identifying himself with them, and, as their *representative* and intercessory priest, 'accepts the punishment of their iniquity.' Thus he typifies Messiah the Sin-bearer and great Intercessor. The prophet's own life and experience forms the fit starting-point of the prophecy concerning the sin-atonement" (Fausset on 9:4).

And note Fausset's other comments on the connection between the stories and the prophecies:

"Between the vision of Nebuchadnezzar in the 2nd ch., and that of Daniel in the 7th, four narratives of Daniel's and his friends' personal history are introduced. As ch. 2. and 7. go together, so ch. 3. and 6. (the deliverance from the lions' den), ch. 4. and 5.; of these last two pairs, the former shows God's nearness to save His saints when faithful to Him, at the very time they seem to be crushed by the world-power. The second pair shows in the case of the two kings of the first monarchy, how God can suddenly humble the world-power in the height of its insolence. The latter advances from mere self-glorification, in the

fourth chapter, to open opposition to God in the fifth. Nebuchadnezzar demands homage to be paid to his image (ch. 3.), and boasts of his power (ch. 4.). But Belshazzar goes further, blaspheming God by polluting His holy vessels.

"There is a similar progression in the conduct of God's people. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refuse *positive* homage to the image of the world-power (ch. 3.); Daniel will not yield it even a *negative* homage, by omitting for a time the worship of God (ch. 6.). Jehovah's power, manifested for the saints against the world in individual histories (ch. 3.-6.), is exhibited, in ch. 2. and 7., in world-wide prophetic pictures; the former heightening the effect of the latter" (*ibid.*, on 3:1).

"The literal image of Nebuchadnezzar is a typical prophecy of 'the image of the beast,' connected with mystical Babylon, in Revelation 13:14" (*ibid.*, on 3:6).

The effect of Daniel's interpretation on Nebuchadnezzar was, "he fell upon his face" before the servant of God. He who was accustomed to kings falling on their face before him, prostrates himself abjectly before his captive—a striking earnest "of the future prostration of the world-power before Messiah and His [saints in the coming] kingdom" (*ibid.*, on 2:46).

Nebuchadnezzar is a type of antichrist, to whose image as many as will not offer worship shall be killed (*ibid.*, on Rev. 13:14).

"Nebuchadnezzar saw superficially the world-power as a splendid human figure, and the kingdom of God as a mere stone at the first. Daniel sees the world-kings in their inner essence as of an *animal* nature lower than human, being estranged from God; and that only in the kingdom of God ('the Son of man,' the representative-man) is the true dignity of man realized. . . . The animal with all its sagacity looks always to the ground, without consciousness of relation to God.

"What elevates man is communion with God, in willing subjection to Him. His erect posture, with head uplifted towards heaven, is indicative of his high destiny. The moment he tries to exalt himself to independence of God, like Nebuchadnezzar (ch. 4:30), he sinks to the beast's level.

Daniel's acquaintance with the animal colossal figures in Babylon and with Nineveh was a psychological preparation for his animal-visions" (*ibid.*, on Dan 7:1).

H. G. Guinness has done similarly in applying the narratives of Dan 3-6 as illustrative of the themes of the visions in chapters 2 and 7-12:

"The leading moral characteristics of all the four great empires, of which Nebuchadnezzar was both head and representative, have been ignorance of God, idolatry, and cruel persecution of the saints. Nebuchadnezzar, prior to this incident, knew not God. He set up a great image, and commanded all men, on pain of death, to fall down and worship it; he cast into the burning fiery furnace the faithful witnesses who refused to obey the idolatrous mandate.

"How have all his successors, with one consent, followed this example! Idolatry, literal or spiritual, and persecution, pagan or Papal, have marked the whole succession of Gentile monarchies. These episodes in Nebuchadnezzar's life are clearly typical; these features of his character have been stamped indelibly on all his successors; these incidents answer to events on the scale of nations and centuries, with which history makes us familiar" (Guinness, *Light for the Last Days*, p. 41).

"Christ vouchsafed these revelations to Daniel, in order that the Hebrew Church, having these prophecies in her hand, might not faint and falter in her day of trouble, and in order also that the Christian Church, studying diligently the words of the Divine Lord in the Book of Daniel, may look beyond the present distress to the future victory and everlasting bliss which will succeed it.

"The last of Our Lord's eight beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount is reserved for those who suffer for righteousness' sake. The position of that beatitude—the Octave—seems to be prophetic. The last beatitude looks forward to the last age of the Church, the age of suffering and of glory. The greatest blessing is reserved for the last. In that beatitude alone the word *blessed* occurs twice, to mark the special emphasis of that benediction; and the word *persecute* occurs three times—'Blessed

are they that are *persecuted for righteousness' sake*; blessed are ye when men shall revile you and *persecute* you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My Name sake; rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven; for so *persecuted* they the *prophets* that were before you.' Daniel the prophet, the man greatly beloved in the Old Testament, was a precursor of St. John, the beloved disciple and prophet of the New. Both were 'persecuted for righteousness' sake.' Both were delivered by God. Daniel lived to see the decree for the restoration of the Temple at Jerusalem, to which in the fulness of time Christ came. St. John lived to see the building up of the Universal Church of Christ, in which He ever dwells, and the glories of the heavenly Jerusalem. Both had visions of Christ. The sequel and completion of the Book of Daniel is to be found in the Apocalypse of St. John. Both are examples to those who live in the latter days, and cheer them under persecution by the gleams of everlasting glory that will follow. Great is their reward in heaven.

"Go thy way till the end be, for thou shalt rest and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.' These are the concluding words of the Book of Daniel, and they are addressed to all who like him, placed as he was in the midst of the temptations of an evil world, stand the trial of their faith with patience and charity, with self-denial and sanctity of life, with perfect trust and fervent prayer, and with holy boldness and courage, and unwavering reliance on the truth, the love, the righteousness, and omnipotence of God, and look forward from the turmoils of earth to the eternal peace of the Jerusalem that is above" (Wordsworth, p. xxv.).

"If in the most unvarnished books of inspired history, such as Genesis or Exodus, where prophecy is not the ostensible object or peculiarly marked feature, you have incident on incident clearly used in the New Testament as foreshadowing good things to come, we may still more strongly infer that in a prophecy such as this of Daniel we are to read not only the visions as directly prophetic, but also the facts connected with them as instinct with a kindred spirit. . . .

"We shall find, in this third chapter of Daniel,

as in the three which follow, that each has its distinct features; and that these were not merely seen in what was passing in the days of Daniel, but that they were registered by the prophet to indicate the course now past, and the future destiny of the great Gentile powers. We are to view them in the light of the prophecies that surround them—to take them, not as facts put down, as any man might do it, at haphazard. In short, God has given them here, linked in the most intimate way with the prophecy where they are found.

"We have seen, after the vision of the great image, that a chapter followed presenting at first sight little appearance of connection with the prophecy, but which, I trust, was shewn to have a very important bearing upon it. For in chapter ii. we had merely the general history of the Gentile powers, not their moral qualities. Empire after empire rose on, and disappeared from, the scene of God's providence. But what was the character of these empires, how they used the power that was given into their hands by God, we saw not. These historical incidents were introduced purposely between the first grand outline in chapter ii. and the details which follow from chapter vii. to the end of the book. They show the conduct of the empires while in possession of supreme authority from God in the world" (William Kelly, *Notes on Daniel*, p. 70).

"Daniel v. and vi. form a part of the series of what we may call moral chapters. They are historical, but withal stamped with the character of a foreshadowing of the future, receiving light from and casting light upon the prophecies which precede and follow them" (*ibid.*, p. 88).

"Works devoted to study of the prophecies of Daniel often omit consideration of chapter 3 entirely as do S. P. Tregelles and Robert D. Culver. Others, such as Geoffrey R. King, interpret the chapter as not only history but parable and prophecy. The introduction of the golden image of Nebuchadnezzar in chapter 3 immediately following Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great image depicting Gentile times, even if its parabolic implications are ignored, obviously is intended to convey not only spiritual truth in general, but characteristics of the times of the

Gentiles. Its study, accordingly, not only provides spiritual insights but contributes to the overall presentation of prophecy in Daniel" (Walvoord, p. 79).

"In the light of Daniel's revelation of the broad scope of Gentile power beginning in chapter 2, Nebuchadnezzar's experience seems to take on the larger meaning of the humbling of Gentile power by God and the bringing of the world into submission to Himself. In the light of other passages in the Bible speaking prophetically of Babylon and its ultimate overthrow, of which Isaiah 13 and 14 may be taken as an example, it becomes clear that the contest between God and Nebuchadnezzar is a broad illustration of God's dealings with the entire human race and especially the Gentile world in its creaturely pride and failure to recognize the sovereignty of God" (*ibid.*, p. 95).

"The long chapter devoted to this incident which brought the Babylonian Empire to its close is undoubtedly recorded in the Word of God not only for its historic fulfillment of the prophecies relative to the Babylonian Empire but also as an illustration of divine dealing with a wicked world. In many respects, modern civilization is much like ancient Babylon, resplendent with its monuments

of architectural triumph, as secure as human hands and ingenuity could make it, and yet defenseless against the judgment of God at the proper hour. . . . Much as Babylon fell on that sixteenth day of Tishri (Oct. 11 or 12) 539 B.C., . . . so the world will be overtaken by disaster when the day of the Lord comes (1 Th. 5:1-3). The disaster of the world, however, does not overtake the child of God; Daniel survives the purge and emerges triumphant as one of the presidents of the new kingdom" (*ibid.*, p. 131).

"Although historical and to be accepted in its literal portrayal of an event, it is also parabolic like chapter 3 and is a foreshadowing of the ultimate deliverance of the people of Israel from their persecutors in the time of the great tribulation. . . . When the power of God is finally demonstrated at the second coming of Christ, the persecutors of Israel and the enemies of God will be judged and destroyed much like the enemies of Daniel. Like Daniel, however, the people of God in persecution must remain true regardless of the cost" (*ibid.*, p. 144).

"In the first six chapters, generalities are revealed. In the last six chapters, specifics are given" (*ibid.*, p. 150).

Appendix F—The Year-Day Principle

The time-honored formula for the year-day principle is that set out by T. R. Birks in his book *First Elements of Sacred Prophecy*:

"Year-Day Principle, General Nature of.—It may be summed up in these maxims:

"1. That the church, after the ascension of Christ, was intended of God to be kept in the lively expectation of his speedy return in glory.

"2. That, in the divine counsels, a long period of nearly two thousand years was to intervene between the first and the second advent, and to be marked by a dispensation of grace to the Gentiles.

"3. That, in order to strengthen the faith and hope of the church under the long delay, a large part of the whole interval was prophetically

announced, but in such a manner that its true length might not be understood, till its own close seemed to be drawing near.

"4. That, in the symbolical prophecies of Daniel and St. John, other times were revealed along with this, and included under one common maxim of interpretation.

"5. That the periods thus figuratively revealed are exclusively those in Daniel and St. John, which relate to the general history of the church between the time of the prophet and the second advent.

"6. That, in these predictions, each day represents a natural year, as in the vision of Ezekiel; that a month denotes thirty, and a time three hundred and sixty years" (p. 311).

This statement recommends itself to a candid mind, but some may inquire, Is this all that can be said? The purpose of this appendix is to make some additional observations on the matter, and these will now be set forth in point fashion.¹

1. The time prophecies are essential parts of two Bible books that God Himself has urged us to understand. Daniel, for example, is the only Old Testament book concerning which we have record of Christ Himself urging its specific study (Mt 24:15), and the Apocalypse opens with a divine blessing upon both "he that readeth" and "they that hear." We are assured by the Sacred Record that all the "sealed" portions of Daniel's prophecy would be understood by the wise in "the time of the end," and the situation would needs be similar, regarding those prophecies in the Revelation that are so closely allied to Daniel's. Understanding of both, including the time periods, would of necessity eventuate together, and it is *the time periods particularly* which are referred to in Scripture as being sealed until the latter days (cf. Dan 8:26; 12:4; Acts 1:7).

2. The time periods in more than one place are announced amid settings of particular solemnity. In three instances Christ Himself is the Revelator of the time messages (cf. Dan 8:11-14; 10:5, 6; 12:6, 7 with Rev 1:13-16). The theme in each instance is likewise impressive. The context of the 2300 days, the 1290, and the 1335 days each stresses the cataclysmic events associated with the close of the great controversy between Christ and Satan (see Dan 8:17, 25, 26; 12:3, 4, 9-13).

3. The preceding point regarding the divinely indicated importance of the prophetic times finds support in the fact that ordinary "days" cannot be here intended by these prophecies. As the visions themselves embrace comprehensive rather than trifling themes, so the time periods emphasized are symbolic of extensive, rather than limited, eras.

a. The visions, including the time periods, are obviously symbolic, but the basic symbolism employed in each instance has definite ascertainable significance. In Dan 2, for example, the four metals of the image are identified as signifying four kingdoms. Likewise the four beasts of Dan 7 are interpreted as representing four kingdoms. Thus the time periods incorporated in such

prophecies must, as with the other features, be of necessity symbolic rather than literal, and capable of elucidation.

b. The peculiar way in which the time periods in Daniel and Revelation are expressed also indicates that they must apply symbolically. Consider for example the "time, two times, and half a time" of Dan 7:25. Why is it phrased this peculiar way if it refers but to three and a half years? In two other places this interval occurs in Scripture, and in both these cases it is expressed by its natural phrase, "three years and six months" (see Lk 4:25; Jas 5:17). This is true in every similar case. Paul remained at Corinth "a year and six months" (Acts 18:11). David reigned in Hebron "seven years and six months" (2 Sa 2:11). He is described as being in the Philistine camp "a year and four months" (1 Sa 27:7). How different from these cases is the expression "a time, two times, and half a time." The year-day theory would require that the symbol be expressed in such a way as to indicate that it is not to be taken literally. Does not Dan 7:25 do this admirably?

c. The case is similar with the next great time period—the 2300 days. "For two thousand and three hundred evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state." This is certainly not the usual and literal expression for a period of between six and seven years. There are only three instances in all Bible history where a period beyond forty days is expressed in days only, and it is absolutely without precedent in Scripture that periods of more than one year should be thus described (Gen 7:24; 8:3; Neh 6:15; Est 1:4).

The different expressions used to denote the same period are an added proof that the "time, two times, and half a time" of Dan 7:25 cannot represent three and a half natural years. Twice it is mentioned as "time, two times, and half a time" (7:25; 12:7); once as "a time, and times, and half a time" (Rev 12:14); twice as "forty-two months" (Rev 11:2; 13:5); and twice as "one thousand two hundred and sixty days" (Rev 11:3; 12:6). Comparing the context in each case, it is evident that all these apply to the same period, but the natural expression of "three years and six months" is not once used. Obviously God is

indicating the symbolic nature of the expressions.

"The Holy Spirit seems, in a manner, to exhaust all the phrases by which the interval could be expressed, including always that one form, which would be used of course in ordinary writing, and is used invariably in Scripture on other occasions, to denote the literal period. This variation is most significant if we accept the year-day system but quite inexplicable on the other view" (Birks, *First Elements of Sacred Prophecy*, p. 352).

d. The context of both Dan 7 and 8 forbids the idea that the periods mentioned could be literal. In the first case the little horn emerges from the fourth world empire and endures till the time of the judgment and the advent, and 7:25 declares that the period of "a time, two times, and half a time" extends over most of this time. How impossible this would be if three and a half years only were intended! Similarly, in 8:17 the prophet is told that the 2300 days would extend from the restoration of the sanctuary until "the time of the end." This means that a period of approximately 2300 years is involved. The treading down of the sanctuary brought to view in 8:11-13 could not begin before the restoration spoken of in 9:25, in the fifth century BC. And besides this, its terminus is expressly stated as belonging to the latter days, just prior to the final proclamation of the gospel by the "wise" (see 12:3, 4). It has been largely overlooked by critics that 8:17, when linked with 12:3, 4, 9, 10, 13, makes it conclusive that the 2300-day period covers many centuries. Likewise in Rev 12 the forty-two-month period covers the greater part of the time between the first and second advents, when the church would be in the wilderness of persecution during the Dark Ages. This is granted by almost all expositors.

4. Inasmuch as short-lived beasts are employed as symbols of long-existent empires, it is most likely that the times mentioned are also presented to scale, with a small time unit representing a larger one.

5. The one measure of time commonly used by man which is not employed in the symbolism of Daniel and Revelation is that of a year. Days, weeks, and months are referred to (1260 *days*, seventy *weeks*, forty-two *months*), but the

ordinary word for year is not found. Instead the Hebrew word *mô'ed* is used (Dan 12:7). This term, translated "a time," does not have for its usual meaning "a year." The word occurs often in the Old Testament and is used to designate periods of different lengths. The first use is in Gen 1:14: "Let them be for signs and for *seasons*." The word is often used to state the appointed time of all the feasts of the law (see Lev 23:2, 4, 37, 44; Num 9:2, 3, 7, 13; etc.). The most obvious explanation of this omission of the usual word for year in Daniel and Revelation, while the other calendar terms *are* found, is that the year is the measure typified throughout these prophecies and that the day, the smallest of the symbolic calendar times, is employed to represent it. There is a natural appropriateness in the year-day principle being chosen by the Creator when we remember that there are two great revolutions of the earth, one on its axis occupying twenty-four hours, which gives rise to the day, and the other the earth in its orbit occupying 365 days, which gives rise to the year. It is appropriate indeed that the lesser should be used as a symbol of the greater.

6. Are there any indications in the rest of Scripture that God has ever chosen such symbolism? In Num 14:34 and Eze 4:6 we find evidence that such is the case. God has chosen on other occasions to use precisely this symbolism; one of these occasions was during the time of Daniel's captivity, and its use was in connection with a contemporary prophet.

7. The pragmatic test should now be applied and the question asked: Have any of Daniel's prophecies already met with a precise fulfillment that accords with the principle we are studying? Dan 9:24-27, the prophecy of the seventy weeks, seems to offer just such a fulfillment. While the Hebrew word here for weeks, *shabûa'*, simply means a hebdomad (a unit of seven days), nevertheless the Scriptural usage of this term is always for a week of days (see Gen 29:27, 28; Dan 10:2. It is not used, for example, in Lev 25:1-10 for this seven-year period). Inasmuch as other evidence shows that this period of 490 years is cut off from the longer period of the 2300, it is obvious that the latter must consist of years also. Thus here in Dan 9 we have the pragmatic test met, and the

year-day principle justified, despite the fact that the word *day* is nowhere used in this passage.

8. Another testimony that should not be omitted is that of Rev 10:5-7. The New Testament quotation referring to this passage in Daniel indicates that the fulfillment of the time periods in the Daniel passage were still future when John made the prophecy. Only the year-day principle applied to Daniel's periods could make these New Testament fulfillments possible, providing that these periods were meant to be as specific as other Bible periods such as the 120 years before the Flood, or the 450 years concerning Abraham's seed, or the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness.

9. The principle of repetition and enlargement characterizing the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation also casts light on the time periods employed in these books. It is obvious to any unbiased reader of Daniel that the seventh chapter covers the same ground as the second. Similarly chapter 8 again traverses the world empires, even naming two of those first mentioned in the first outline of chapter 2. Chapter 8 finishes with the destruction of the wicked by the stone cut out "without hands" as does chapter 2. As certainly as the fourth empire is pictured as remaining in its fragmentary state until the Second Advent, so it is with the little horn of chapter 8.

Furthermore, the fourth outline in Daniel, that of chapters 11 and 12, again covers the identical ground of chapters 2, 7, and 8. The description found in 11:31-45 clearly accords with 8:11-13, 23-25. The final chapter of Daniel gives in greater detail what is found in verses 44 and 45 of chapter 2. Thus in order to interpret the period mentioned in 8:14 it is essential that we take into consideration the fact that the chief power prominent for the 2300 days is represented in chapter 11 as enduring until the kingdom of God is set up. Therefore the inadequacy of interpreting the 2300 evening-mornings as only days during the Maccabean era is apparent.

Evangelical scholars like Edward J. Young, for whom we have respect, assert that prophetic periods are symbolic only. In answer we would quote Nathanael West:

"Even granting that prophetic numbers are

symbolic and schematic, IT DOES NOT FOLLOW that they have no temporal value. The fact that they represent an 'IDEA'—and no one denies this—does not prove that they do not represent 'time' also."

And in another place he says:

"The prophetic numbers are symbolical only because, first of all, they are literal. The four hundred years DID begin and end. The seventy years DID begin and end. The one thousand years SHALL begin and end. ALL are spoken of in the same way. The seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks, DID begin and end. . . . Messiah DID come 'after threescore and two weeks' and 'seven weeks.' 'After,' 'until,' 'unto' in answer to the question, 'How long?' and 'O my Lord, when?' ARE chronological."²

Similarly Rev 11:2 refers to Dan 8:14, indicating that the fulfillment of the 2300 days was projected well into the Christian age.

Another objection to the year-day principle: there have been so many different dates set for the conclusion of the time periods—the majority of them obviously wrong—that such a hazy method of conveying truth could not come from God. Notice the well-worded objection of Thomas Maitland:

"If such an event as this (the delivery of the saints into the hands of the blasphemous and persecuting power) has taken place, is it possible that the Church of God can be at a loss to decide *when* and *how* it happened? Can there be a difference of opinion among pious, and learned, and laborious inquirers into the Word of God and the history of the Church? Nay, further we ask—'Is the Church at this moment in the hands of the blasphemous little horn, or is it not?' Mr. Faber, and many more, assert that it is. Mr. Cunninghame, Mr. Frere, and others, are as fully convinced that it is not. And 9/10ths of the Christian world stand silent, avowedly unable to give an opinion on the subject. . . . When did the saints find out that they have been delivered over, not for ages. Is this credible? But, in fact, when did it happen? . . . On this point, too, there is a great difference of opinion."³

What shall we say about this objection? Birks in his day affirmed that we should say that the

objection is a plausible one, but that it assumes that which it sets out to prove—namely that the prophecy was of no help to the church unless all its members accurately located its application. However, if the prophecy was given for the church throughout many generations to reveal a dangerous opposer and to give light in regard to the moral features of divine providence through many centuries of time, then it is clear that all these purposes could be fulfilled even if the exact application was not seen for several generations. And if mistakes of even a century or more were made at first in the date of the event, all the main features and practical lessons would still be substantially the same, just as surely as the features and character of a person could be well known even though we were a few years in error as to the date of his birth.

A parallel case is the revelation made to Abraham regarding his seed's sojourning for four hundred years and enduring persecution. It cannot be proved that the seed of Abraham did actually serve and were afflicted by a strange nation during the whole of the four hundred years. Similarly during the 1260 years, while a precise period was intended, the recognition of that time by the church could be more definitely recognized by the people of God during part of that time rather than during the whole.

And last, it should be remembered that the maxims already declared to be the foundation of the year-day system actually demand the situation that the critic presents. We would expect successive anticipation for example as to the dates involved. Only by such gradual approach to the correct view could the two main purposes have been fulfilled: growing understanding of the prophecy with a constant and unbroken anticipation of the Lord's coming. Maitland's objection assumes that the church must either be in total ignorance of the times or come at once into full possession of perfect knowledge. All analogies of the church's past and even of individual Christian experience declare such an objection false.

According to T. R. Birks, there are only three alternatives God could have adopted with reference to revelation of the times and seasons to His church: He could keep the church in total

ignorance till the end, translate it suddenly from complete ignorance to complete knowledge, or third, give gradually increasing light, till at length the Sun of righteousness actually arose. Suppose God had adopted the first alternative and had given the church nothing but the most general statements for her guide through the centuries. As century after century passed, would not believers have been lulled into slumber, believing that the return of the Master was a vague, indefinite possibility, infinitely afar off? After ten centuries of waiting, could not the church rationally realize there could quite easily be ten centuries more, and therefore relax? Each generation would have had a still weaker expectation of the Advent.

Consider the next possibility—that the light be given suddenly in its completeness. How then could the church fulfill the instruction "Watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is"? The testimony of the ages is that always and on every subject the increase of knowledge has been gradual. "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." The gradual unfolding of the light of prophecy is in exact accord with God's purpose of sustaining His church in anticipation of His return.

The believer in the year-day principle has just as much evidence of the truth of this belief as he could expect. He will admit that objections can be raised to the theory, but he realizes that these are few compared with the objections that can be raised to the rejection of the principle. Truth here, as in every other philosophical matter, is determined by the weight of evidence. Undoubtedly the scales are well down on the side of the historical interpreters of the ages who present more of the church invisible than any other interpretive group. Among evangelicals, those who literalize the time periods are for the most part dispensationalists, and their attitude in this matter is part and parcel of their erroneous literalistic and futuristic exegesis of the Old Testament and the Book of Revelation.⁴

It should be noted that the prophetic times are the most certain identifiers of the nearness of Christ's coming that the Scripture affords. It is doubtful whether any of the other signs customarily quoted are nearly as conclusive. Without the

time prophecies we would be left to wonder whether the world had yet another weary millennium or two to endure before Christ appears to banish sin and sorrow.

To quote Birks again:

"That entire rejection of all prophetic chronology, which follows, of course, on the denial of the year-day, is most of all to be deplored, from its deadly and paralyzing influence on the great hope of the church. . . . The prophetic times, indeed, when separated from the context and viewed in themselves only, are a dry and worthless skeleton: but when taken in connection with the related events, clothed with historical facts, and joined with those spiritual affections which should attend the study of God's providence; like the bones in the human frame, they give strength to what was

feeble, and union to what was disjointed, and form, and beauty, and order to the whole outline and substance of these sacred and divine prophecies."⁵

⁵ The writer acknowledges his indebtedness to T. R. Birks and to H. G. Guinness for several of these points. Because such works as *First Elements of Sacred Prophecy* and *The Approaching End of the Age* are now difficult to procure, this emphasis on some matters set forth therein may not be amiss.

⁶ Nathanael West, *The Thousand Years in Both Testaments*, pp. 94, 98.

⁷ Thomas Maitland, *Inquiry Into the Nature of the Prophetic Times*, pp. 53, 76.

⁸ See Oswald Allis, *Prophecy and the Church*, p. 19.

⁹ Birks, *First Elements of Sacred Prophecy*, pp. 415, 416.

Appendix G

The Apocalypse, the Day of Atonement, and the Latter Days

Almost all scholars have applied the Day of Atonement as a type of the priestly work of Christ throughout the entire Christian age. This is done primarily on the basis of Heb 9:8, 12, 25; 10:19, 20; 6:19, 20. Almost all the commentaries listed in the bibliography make this application. Some scholars through the centuries, however, have believed that the Day of Atonement has a special application to events immediately preceding the return of Christ. This position is based mainly on the fact that the Book of Revelation in many places alludes to the imagery of this solemn Jewish fast. To show that this second position is sound is the aim of this appendix.

More than two centuries ago Sir Isaac Newton penned the following significant statement:

"The Temple is the scene of the visions, and the visions in the Temple relate to the feast of the seventh month, for the feasts of the Jews were typical of things to come. The Passover related to the first coming of Christ, and the feasts of the seventh month to his second coming: his first coming being therefore over before this Prophecy

was given, the feasts of the seventh month are here only alluded unto."¹

The New Testament obviously endorses the idea that the Jewish festival year prefigured the entire Christian age. The typical genius of the Old Testament economy as everywhere recognized in the New Testament provides the foundation for such a supposition. Furthermore, the inspired apostles specifically apply the Jewish festivals in this way.

For example, in 1 Cor 5:7 Paul alludes to the Passover as the type of the crucifixion of Christ. The gospel writers are also careful to point out that the climax to Christ's ministry occurred in connection with the Passover. In Rev 7:9 the redeemed are pictured as standing before the throne "clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." According to the translators of the KJV, as shown by their marginal notations, this is a reference to the Feast of Tabernacles.

In Lev 23:40 we read: "And you shall take on the first day the fruit of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and boughs of leafy trees, and willows

of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days." In harmony with this is Christ's frequent allusion to the harvest in connection with the end of the world. The Feast of Tabernacles was also called the Feast of Harvest, occurring as it did after the completion of the gathering in of the year's produce. The references in the New Testament to Christ as the firstfruits and the time record of the occurrence of Pentecost help to fill out this picture of the typical significance of the Jewish ceremonial year. A following comparison illustrates the point made by Sir Isaac Newton and other scholars on this matter:

Spring Festivals Typifying Significant Events of First Advent

Passover	Crucifixion
First Fruits	Resurrection
Pentecost	Pentecost

Autumn Festivals Typifying Significant Events of Second Advent

Trumpets	Rev 8 and 9
Day of Atonement	Rev 8:1-6; 11:19; etc.
Feast of Tabernacles	Rev 7:9; 14:14-19

The spring festivals have always come in for much attention and have been applied to the First Advent with universal consent by evangelical interpreters. Unfortunately, the festivals of autumn have not met with the same study emphasis. In a standard work on Leviticus in the *Expositor's Bible* we have the following illuminating statement by Dr. S. H. Kellogg as he of necessity turned his attention to the feasts of the seventh month:

"We have already seen that the earlier feasts of the year were also prophetic; that Passover and Unleavened Bread pointed forward to Christ, our Passover, slain for us; Pentecost, to the spiritual ingathering of the firstfruits of the world's harvest, fifty days after the presentation of our Lord in resurrection, as the wave-sheaf of the firstfruits. We may therefore safely infer that these remaining feasts of the seventh month must be typical also. But, if so, typical of what? Two things may be safely said in this matter. The significance of the three festivals of this seventh month must be

interpreted in harmony with what has already passed into fulfilment; and, in the second place, inasmuch as the feast of trumpets, the day of atonement, and the feast of tabernacles all belong to the seventh and last month of the ecclesiastical year, they must find their fulfilment in connection with what Scripture calls 'the last times.'

"Keeping the first point in view, we may then safely say that if Pentecost typified the firstfruits of the world's harvest in the ingathering of an election from all nations, the feast of tabernacles must then typify the completion of that harvest in a spiritual ingathering, final and universal. Not only so, but, inasmuch as in the antitypical fulfilment of the wave-sheaf in the resurrection of our Lord, we were reminded that the consummation of the new creation is in resurrection from the dead, and that in regeneration is therefore involved resurrection, hence the feast of tabernacles, as celebrating the absolute completion of the year's harvest, must typify also the resurrection season, when all that are Christ's shall arise from the dead at His coming.

"And, finally, whereas this means for the now burdened earth permanent deliverance from the curse, and the beginning of a new age thus signalised by glorious life in resurrection, in which are enjoyed the blessed fruits of life's labours and pains for Christ, this was shadowed forth by the ordinance that immediately upon the seven days of tabernacles should follow a feast of the eighth day, the first day of a new week, in celebration of the beginning season of rest from all the labours of the field.

"Most beautifully, thus regarded, does all else connected with the feast of tabernacles correspond, as type to antitype, to the revelation of the last things, and therein reveal its truest and deepest spiritual significance: the joy, the reunion, the rejoicing with son and with daughter, the fulness of gladness also for the widow and the fatherless; and this, not only for those in Israel, but also for the stranger, not of Israel,—for Gentile as well as Israelite was to have part in the festivity of that day; and, again, the full attainment of the most complete consecration, signified in the tenfold burnt-offering;—all finds its place here.

"And so now we can see why it was that our

Saviour declared (Matt. xiii. 39) that the end of this present age should be the time of harvest; and how Paul, looking at the future spiritual ingathering, places the ingathering of the Gentiles (Rom. xi. 25) as one of the last things. In full accord with this interpretation of the typical significance of this feast it is that in Zech. xiv. we find it written that in the predicted day of the Lord, when (ver. 5) the Lord 'shall come, and all the holy ones' with Him, and (ver. 9) 'the Lord shall be King over all the earth; . . . the Lord . . . one, and His name one,' then (ver. 16) 'everyone that is left of all the nations . . . shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles;' and, moreover, that so completely shall consecration be realised in that day that (ver. 20) even upon the bells of the horses shall the words be inscribed, 'Holy unto the Lord!' "2

This long quotation has been given in full because Dr. Kellogg adequately presents the reasoning of those who apply the feasts of autumn to antitypical events associated with the second advent of Christ. How, then, do such writers interpret the latter-day significance of the Day of Atonement? Dr. Kellogg asks:

"Now, if the feast of tabernacles has been correctly interpreted, as presignifying in symbol the completion of the great world harvest in the end of the age, does the prophetic word reveal anything in connection with the last things as preceding that great harvest, and, in some sense, preparing for and ushering in that day, which should be the antitype of the great day of atonement?"3

He then proceeds to suggest that the antitype would be the repentance of literal Israel and her cleansing from sin. This view of reclaiming Israel as the event signified in this connection is not peculiar to Dr. Kellogg, but has been echoed by several. The same scholars generally apply the Feast of Trumpets to the warning message of the approaching advent of Christ, and Mt 24:14 is often quoted in this regard.

The above constitutes evidence that it is not a peculiar view which represents the Day of Atonement as having special application prior to the second coming of Christ. The next step is to inquire, What are some of the references in Reve-

lation that employ Day of Atonement imagery, and who are some of the scholars that have drawn attention to such?

Frederick Nolan, noted linguist and theologian of the nineteenth century, asserted in *The Time of the Millennium Investigated* that on many occasions the attention of antiquaries and scholars had been drawn to the references to the Day of Atonement in the Book of Revelation. After declaring his belief that the imagery of the seventh seal was derived from the great Day of Atonement and the jubilee, he stated: "The analogy between this description, and the service of the Temple, upon one of the most solemn festivals of the Mosaic ceremonial, is so obvious that it has often excited the attention of the antiquary and scholar."4

He further asserts that the frequent allusions in Rev 9 and 15 to the ark of the tabernacle, the altar, and the incense, refer not to the "daily service," but to the "peculiar solemnity" of the service on the "great day of Atonement," performed "by the high priest, in the holiest place of the Temple," and celebrated in the seventh month.

Nolan notes that the jubilee always commenced on the Day of Atonement and was ushered in with the sound of trumpets. Thus to him the opening of the seventh seal with its allusions to the Feast of Trumpets and to the Day of Atonement points to the opening of the millennium and the true jubilee.4 Joshua Spalding, a contemporary of Nolan, was also a writer on the prophecies of the Book of Revelation. Like Nolan, he held that the feasts of the seventh month were symbolic of the final restitution of all things. L. E. Froom gives in some detail the views of this writer in his third volume of *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*.5

Another writer referred to by L. E. Froom is John Tudor, one-time editor of the *Church of England Quarterly Review*. Commenting on the pouring out of the last vial, Tudor wrote:

"The temple of God is then opened, and the ark of his testament seen, xi. 19; and the voice issues from the throne, xvi. 17; both expressions equally denoting the holy of holies, which was only entered once a year, on the day of atonement. This period is therefore our day of atonement, and requires our particular notice, to know what events

we may expect, answering to the type."⁶

Elsewhere in speaking of Rev 8:1-5 and 11:19, he affirms that "all the imagery in this poem was taken from the Day of Atonement"—the golden censer, the incense, the deep affliction, the temple opened, and the ark exposed ("indicating the opening of the veil on the day of atonement").⁷

Sir Isaac Newton, perhaps more than any other scholar, has stressed the point made in the first quotation of this appendix, namely that the visions of the Book of Revelation abound with the imagery of the feasts of the seventh month.

Commenting on Rev 5, Newton declares:

"It was the custom for the High-Priest, seven days before the fast of the seventh month, to continue constantly in the Temple, and study the book of the Law, that he might be perfect in it against the day of expiation; wherein the service, which was various and intricate, was wholly to be performed by himself; part of which service was reading the Law to the people; and to promote his studying it, there were certain Priests appointed by the Sanhedrim to be with him those seven days in one of his chambers in the Temple, and there to discourse with him about the Law, and read it to him and put him in mind of reading and studying it himself. This his opening and reading the Law those seven days, is alluded unto in the Lamb's opening the seals."⁸

And on Rev 8:1-5, Newton further says:

"The seventh seal was therefore opened on the day of expiation, and then *there was silence in heaven for half an hour. And an Angel, the High-Priest, stood at the Altar, having a golden Censer; and there was given him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all Saints, upon the golden Altar which was before the throne.* The custom was on other days, for one of the Priests to take fire from the great Altar in a silver Censer; but on this day, for the High-Priest to take fire from the great Altar in a golden Censer; and when he was come down from the great Altar, he took incense from one of the Priests who brought it to him, and went with it to the golden Altar: and while he offered the incense, the people prayed without in silence, which is the silence in heaven for half an hour.

"When the High-Priest had laid the incense on the Altar, he carried a Censer of it burning in his hand, into the most holy place before the Ark. *And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the Saints, ascended up before God out of the Angel's hand.* On other days there was a certain measure of incense for the golden Altar: on this day there was a greater quantity for both the Altar and the most holy Place, and therefore it is called *much incense.* . . .

"The solemnity of the day of expiation being finished, the seven Angels sound their trumpets at the great sacrifices of the seven days of the feast of tabernacles; and at the same sacrifices, the seven thunders utter their voices which are the musick of the Temple, and singing of the *Levites*, intermixed with the soundings of the trumpets: and the seven Angels pour out their vials of wrath, which are the drink-offerings of those sacrifices."⁹

Some will not agree with all the details of interpretation offered by Newton or all the references which he declares to point to the Day of Atonement ceremonial. However, certain features of analogy between the visions of Revelation and the solemn fast day of Yom Kippur are undeniable. All authorities are agreed, for example, that a golden censer such as referred to in Revelation 8:3 was used only by the Jewish High Priest on the Day of Atonement.¹⁰

Rev 11:19 is a clearer reference still to another feature of the Day of Atonement, namely the entrance into the most holy place, and the viewing of the ark for the only time in the year. The fact that many scholars have made such quotations as the preceding is conclusive that the Bible's latest book, with its prophecies specially relating to the last times, harnesses the imagery of this special day to express vital truths. It is also significant that this imagery is associated with references to the other holy days of the seventh month, Trumpets and Tabernacles giving a combined witness to the latter-day application of these typical occasions.

Newton's remarks on the sealing work are especially interesting. He quotes Rev 7:1-3, and says:

"This sealing alludes to a tradition of the Jews, that upon the day of expiation all the people of Israel are sealed up in the books of life and death

(Buxtorf, in *Synagoga Judaica*, c. 18, 21.). For the Jews in their *Talmud* tell us, that in the beginning of every new year, or first day of the month Tishri, the seventh month of the sacred year, three books are opened in judgment: the book of life, in which the names of those are written who are perfectly just; the book of death, in which the names of those are written who are Atheists or very wicked; and a third book, of those whose judgment is suspended till the day of expiation, and whose names are not written in the book of life or death before that day. The first ten days of this month they call the penitential days; and all these days they fast and pray very much, and are very devout, that on the tenth day their sins may be remitted, and their names may be written in the book of life; which day is therefore called the day of expiation. And upon this tenth day, in returning home from the Synagogues, they say to one another, *God the creator seal you to a good year*. For they conceive that the books are now sealed up, and that the sentence of God remains unchanged henceforward to the end of the year.

"The same thing is signified by the two Goats, upon whose foreheads the High-Priest yearly, on the day of expiation, lays the two lots inscribed, *For God* and *For Azazel*; God's lot signifying the people who are sealed with the name of God in their foreheads; and the lot Azazel, which was sent into the wilderness, representing those who receive the mark and the name of the Beast, and go into the wilderness with the great Whore."¹¹

By this statement Sir Isaac Newton declares his belief that the crisis of Rev 13 over the mark of the beast and also the sealing work described earlier both apply to the antitypical Day of Atonement. He places these events in the setting

of judgment as typified by Israel's ancient fast day.

Examining, then, the position of scholars on the Day of Atonement, we find evidence that a goodly number of repute believed the feasts of the seventh month to be typical of events associated with the second advent of Christ. These men did not believe that the significance of the Day of Atonement was exhausted by the use made of it by Paul in Heb 9. That is to say, the scholars referred to believed that the Day of Atonement has a special significance for those living in the last days of earth's history. Commentaries on the Book of Revelation that have discerned the allusions of the visions to Old Testament ceremonial expressly affirm the foregoing view. In the realm of eschatology these facts are of tremendous importance at this time.

¹ Isaac Newton, pp. 308, 309.

² S. H. Kellogg, "The Book of Leviticus," *The Expositor's Bible*, pp. 468-470.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 470.

⁴ Cited by L. E. Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, III, pp. 608-610.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 230-235.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 507.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 504.

⁸ Isaac Newton, pp. 313, 314.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 314, 315.

¹⁰ Herbert Danby (trans.), *The Mishnah*, Yoma iv. 4, p. 167.

¹¹ Isaac Newton, pp. 315, 316.

